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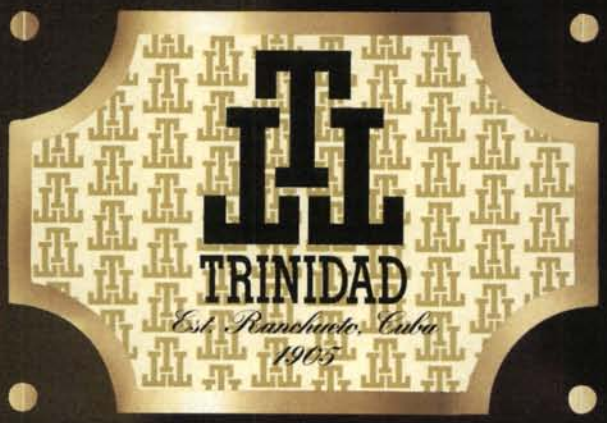

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NATIONAL REVIEW

NOVEMBER 11, 2002 VOL. LIV, NO. 21

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The Cycle of Progress: Advancing Health and Wealth

Indur M. Goklany

Cross-country data show that in any given year, health (measured by life expectancy) and wealth (measured by per capita income) go hand in hand, and that health improves most rapidly in the early stages of a country's economic development. Indeed, it has long been recognized that wealth begets health since people in developed countries are more able to afford better healthcare, including the latest medicines and other medical technologies.

But the converse is equally true: health also begets wealth. Healthier people are more energetic, less prone to absenteeism and, therefore, more productive in whatever economic activity they undertake. When malaria was eradicated in Mymensingh (in Bangladesh), crop yields increased 15 percent because farmers had more time and energy for cultivation. In other areas, elimination of seasonal malaria enabled farmers to plant a second crop.

Healthier people can also devote more time and energy to education and intellectual development. Good health is particularly important during children's formative years. Moreover, the incentives for investing in human capital increase if individual beneficiaries expect to live to the age of sixty rather than, say, merely forty. Not surprisingly, educational levels increase with life expectancy. Today aspiring doctors and researchers spend what once literally would have been a lifetime to hone the skills needed to contribute to their chosen fields. And having acquired this expertise, these doctors and researchers are poised to bring yet others along the same path. Thus better health helps to expand human capital, which aids the creation and diffusion of technology, further advancing health and accelerating economic growth.

Long-term cross-country trends also show that the health level corresponding to any specific level of wealth has risen over time. This improvement is due to broad-based technological advances worldwide. Agricultural technology, for instance, increased food production dramatically, reducing hunger worldwide. The resulting improvements in global health were reinforced by advances in public health and medicine (which range from scientific knowledge of the causes and courses of diseases to new drugs, procedures, diagnostic tests, and other science and technology-based medical advances).

Health and wealth strengthen each other in a virtuous cycle of progress

Clearly, health and wealth strengthen each other in a virtuous cycle of progress. Other mutually-reinforcing elements of that cycle include food production, food access, education and human capital, technological change, and trade in or transfer of ideas, knowledge, goods, and services. However, health and wealth, while critical to the cycle, are not created equal. Wealth, unlike health, is not an end in itself but the means to numerous worthwhile ends. The most important of these ends is, of course, health itself.

Accordingly, developing countries plagued by a relatively heavy burden of disease should foster technological advances in healthcare with the focus on reducing that burden efficiently and spreading the benefits of medical advances more broadly. Even small targeted increases in investments in public health and medicine could be significant; low and middle-income countries spend only 4-5 percent of their GDP on healthcare, supplemented by the 4 percent of official development assistance ($2 billion annually) from developed countries earmarked for health. This would mean rearranging spending priorities.

Equally importantly, developing countries should provide incentives for, and remove barriers to, the voluntary participation of the private sector in spreading and transferring healthcare technologies. Specifically, this means providing greater protection for property rights – intellectual or otherwise – and ensuring fair and equitable returns to entities that incur the risk and expense of researching, developing, manufacturing, or distributing new technologies – including medicines, diagnostic tests, and other medical innovations. Such measures would strengthen the ability of public-private partnerships to propagate advances in healthcare to developing countries, yielding multiple dividends such as better health, greater wealth, reduced hunger, and higher life expectancies. They would also help to jump-start economies that are near-stagnant and whose disease burden remains oppressive.

Finally, the positive relationship between health and wealth applies to developed countries just as it does to less-developed ones. Governments in the United States and Europe can advance both patient welfare and national economic progress by enacting policies to encourage greater private healthcare spending and investment in research and development of safer, more effective medicines and public health technologies, and to reduce barriers to their rapid introduction into the marketplace.

Indur M. Goklany was the D&D Foundation Julian Simon Fellow in 2000 at the Political Economy Research Center (PERC) in Bozeman, Montana, USA. ***This article is based on his longer study, "Economic Growth and the State of Humanity," published by PERC in 2001 and available at www.perc.org.***

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■ LETTERS ■

E PLURIBUS . . .

You might at least have warned us Gentle Readers. Imagine my alarm upon extracting from my mailbox the *New York Times* (which I use to line my guinea pig's cage) and NR, and seeing the horrible FLORENCE KING / A FAREWELL bit on the cover. She is a national treasure and NR will never be the same without her.

Jon Gillooly
Keyser, W.V.

Back in 1990 when I thought I was a liberal, I discovered Florence King and took to her like some folks take to gin. As for Miss King's retirement: Come, Bildad and Zophar, bring on the ashes.

Sylvia Swain Rummel
Fulton, Mo.

Say it isn't so! Michelangelo sculpted until he was nearly 90 and almost blind. Surely Miss King can continue a bit longer!

Peter J. Puleo
Crystal Lake, Ill.

I felt her end was near when Florence wrote recently about constipation, picturing for us the envious sight of a parade horse's easy evacuation. To Florence! May all her future efforts be satisfying and mellifluous.

James V. Stallings
Sikeston, Mo.

Florence King will no longer write her Misanthrope's Corner and I . . . I don't want to live.

Irving Metzman
New York, N.Y.

GRANOLA GRIPES

Rod Dreher's article ("Crunchy Cons," Sept. 30) was much ado about nothing. That the GOP is a "big tent" is news only to the mainstream media. It suits them to portray Republicans as anti-environmental, strip-mall-loving money-grubbers. Mr. Dreher has apparently swallowed that interpretation and considers the "Birkenstock" wing of the party an anomaly. In my experience, "live and let live" happens to be the attitude of the vast majority of Republicans.

Debra Krupp
Gold Canyon, Ariz.

It was clever of you to publish Rod Dreher's article—but also very sad. Sad when the magazine for which Russell Kirk so frequently wrote describes "the permanent things" as the hobby of a marginal few.

Piroska Molnár Haywood
West Lafayette, Ind.

WEARIN' O' THE GREEN—AND ORANGE

Re John Derbyshire's "Hiberno-Fascism" (Oct. 14): Tim Pat Coogan's *1916: The Easter Rising* may be a wretched book, but in the course of condemning it Mr. Derbyshire commits offenses as bad as those he exposes.

According to him, the Easter Rebellion was Ireland's own "beer-hall putsch," and Patrick Pearse and Michael Collins were "Hiberno-fascists." This is a shameful traducing of brave and honorable men, men of deep faith and high principle. Nothing in their conduct or beliefs could justly be called fascist.

The actions of today's IRA are as pointless as they are murderous. Ulster shouldn't be forced by thugs to live under a government it abhors, but neither should the rest of Ireland have been forced to live under English rule. Courage and nobility should be honored wherever they are found.

Mr. Derbyshire should have had the good grace to inform readers that he is British, so they would have had a better basis upon which to decide whether his version of events is valid, or simply the atavistic voice of British imperialism.

Thomas Moore
Alexandria, Va.

As a descendant of Irish patriots, I continue to bristle at NR's anti-Irish bias, especially concerning the heroic battle against British rule in Eire. The latest example: John Derbyshire's loathing and trashing of all things Irish in his recent book review. There seems to be an Anglophile psychological disturbance raging on Lexington Avenue.

Your take on almost all other things is good, and your writing is excellent. Bigotry is a sin, but I can provide a good Irish priest, ready to hear your confessions and tell you to "go and sin no

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more." Otherwise, to use Mr. Derbyshire's words, "we know where you live."

Roderick P. Murphy
Southbridge, Mass.

JOHN DERBYSHIRE REPLIES: *The crux of Mr. Moore's argument is that men of "deep faith and high principle" cannot be fascists. If we take the word "fascism" as denoting an actual political doctrine or style, rather than merely as a term of abuse, this is so obviously untrue that I think I can leave it to readers to supply their own counterexamples.*

I do not agree with Mr. Moore's estimates of Collins and Pearse. I will grant their "courage"—I will grant the same to the September 11 terrorists—but "nobility"? Collins was an organizer of murder squads, and Pearse was a blood-and-soil racist and an anti-Semite of a type rather common in the early 20th century.

As for the Irish being "forced to live under English rule," a Home Rule Bill had actually been passed by Parliament in May 1914. The outbreak of a European war that August put the matter on hold; but it was plain to see that when the war was over autonomy could easily be attained by good-faith negotiations.

Mr. Moore rounds off his fallacies with an error: I am American, not British.

Mr. Murphy's reference to my "loathing and trashing of all things Irish" is incomprehensible. I loathe, and I trashed, Irish republican terrorism, for which I believe the 1916 putsch to be a continuing inspiration. I would write in the same style about any other species of terrorism, if asked to review a book by an author who plainly sympathized with it.

Finally, Mr. Murphy's claim to know what I think about "all things Irish" is absurd.

CHICKEN LITTLES?

In his piece "The Fire Last Time" (Sept. 30), Ramesh Ponnuru refers to critics of the 1991 Gulf War as "Cassandras." While he is correct in his assessment that many of these critics were doomsayers who, thankfully, were not ultimately listened to, there is a slight problem with his reference to Cassandra.

Cassandra was a tragic figure because she was always correct yet never believed. To call Chris Matthews, Barbara Boxer, Pat Buchanan, and Paul Wellstone "Cassandras" is to credit them with a foresight that is quite obviously lacking.

Jonathan Canedo
Crofton, Md.

AN EMBARRASSING SENATOR

Perhaps you could inquire of Sen. Dianne Feinstein just what it is about wearing an American flag pin that she finds embarrassing (The Week, Sept. 30). I see only two possible constructs:

She may be unable to differentiate her agreement with European criticism of certain U.S. policies from the ideals of liberty and justice for which the flag stands. Or, she is cowardly in the face of anti-American sentiment.

Either is unworthy of a senator.

Thomas I. Converse
Columbus, Ohio

ON THEIR GAME

Regarding Kathryn Jean Lopez's "Leagues of Their Own" (Oct. 14): College athletics today would be nonexistent were it not for the support and participation of lesbians. I couldn't help but laugh out loud when I read, "Just a few lesbians on a team can start a trend." Who is kidding whom here?

The only "trend" a lesbian or two might actually help achieve is a winning season! It is the height of arrogance to demand that the very women who sustain women's collegiate sports programs be made to feel guilty or in some way responsible for every complaint hurled by an athlete who doesn't fit in. Lesbians have always been part of women's athletics. Allow me to disabuse Miss Lopez of the notion that lesbians should apologize for their sexuality in an attempt to placate sub-par athletes who can only make the team if it enforces a homophobic quota.

Ana Perez Fernandez
Coral Gables, Fla.

KETCHUP OR FRIES, ANYONE?

It may have been a puerile reaction on my part, or more probably a side effect of my diet, but I was struck by the fact that Hadley Arkes opened his review ("Separation Anxiety," Oct. 14) of a book by Hamburger with a quote from Frankfurter.

Ralph Seibert
Mineral Wells, Tex.

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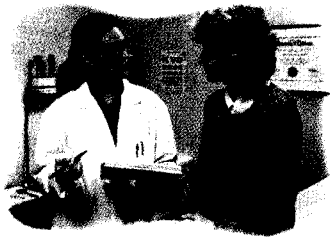

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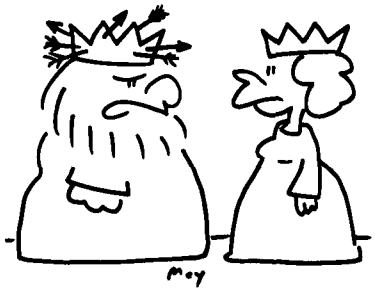
■ FOR THE RECORD ■

■ In *Newsweek* poll, President **Bush** earns 61 percent approval rating and 58 percent support his policies toward Iraq. . . . Bush: "If Iraq gains even greater destructive power, nations in the Middle East would face blackmail, intimidation, or attack. Chaos in that region would be felt in Europe and beyond. . . . Those who choose to live in denial may eventually be forced to live in fear." . . . **Rudy Giuliani**: "The reality is that **Saddam Hussein** remains a significant danger to this country because he supports, condones, and makes terrorism possible." . . . National security adviser **Condoleezza Rice** on rogue nations, in *The New Yorker*: "It's probably best not to name them. . . . Let me say that there are several. It's not three, as in the axis of evil, but it's not tens of, either.". . . Rice, on the possibility of becoming vice president: "We have one."

■ RNC's **Matthew Dowd**: "The president and the Republican party are in a historic and positive position. Since 1934, the incumbent party of the president has lost an average of 27 congressional seats in the first midterm election. It now appears this midterm will not follow the trend of history." . . . Vice President **Cheney** on how he differs from recent predecessors, in *National Journal*: "I'm not running in 2008. . . . I'm not spending my time figuring out how to do a side deal for a county chairman in New Hampshire or raising money for some guy in Colorado so he'll owe me a personal favor. One hundred percent of my time is spent doing the work of the Bush administration." . . . The *Washington Post* reports that Cheney is reading *An Autumn of War* by **Victor Davis Hanson**, "and raving to his staff that it captures his philosophy."

■ Sen. **John Edwards** (D., N.C.), on CNN: "It is really important to see how [Iraq] fits in the big picture, in the message that we want to send to the rest of the world, about respecting their views, getting them involved, consulting them, and that we care about the entire world, not just American interests." . . . Marist poll: 69 percent say **Hillary Clinton** should not "run for president someday," including 53 percent of Democrats. . . . Speculation mounts that Sen. **Lincoln Chafee** (R., R.I.) will switch parties if GOP gains parity in Senate (with Cheney breaking ties). . . . "I anticipate talking with him at some point," says Sen. **Jim Jeffords** (I., Vt.), in *Roll Call*. . . . Sen. **Jean Carnahan** (D., Mo.), in tight race against former representative **Jim Talent**: "I'm the number-one target of the White House. They can't get **Osama bin Laden** so they are going to get me." . . . Sen. **Chuck Hagel** (R., Neb.), according to *Washington Times*: "I think the president is going to have to focus on the economy. I think this thing is starting to tilt very much the wrong way, at least the perception of Americans, that the president is not paying attention. . . . Maybe we should have a new team over there



"I'm not either *overreacting!"*

regarding the president's economic policies." . . . Retiring House majority leader **Dick Armey**, in *USA Today*: "I told the president I thought his Justice Department was out of control. . . . Are we going to save ourselves from international terrorism in order to deny the fundamental liberties we protect to ourselves? It doesn't make sense to me."

■ In Zogby poll, Florida governor **Jeb Bush** (R.) leads challenger **Bill McBride** (D.) 48 percent to 45 percent. . . . Rep. **Connie Morella** (R., Md.) on whether she would vote for Democratic speaker if GOP had one-seat House majority, in *Washington Post*: "I can't hypothesize. . . . Who knows?" . . . **Ken Pentel**, running for Minnesota governor as Green: "Trees are important, but we don't hug them. We do give them an encouraging pat sometimes." . . . House GOP campaign chairman **Tom Davis**, in *New York Times*: "I don't think there's a single worse-run race in the country than the governor's race in California on the part of the Republicans." . . . **Elaine Donnelly**'s Center for Military Readiness gives National Review Online its Spotlight Award for "unfailing vigilance in casting a bright spotlight on national defense and social issues that affect personnel readiness in the military."

■ INS expects to apprehend smallest number of illegal aliens since 1989. . . . Nearly two-thirds of UC-Berkeley freshmen have at least one foreign-born parent. . . . National Jewish Population Survey finds American Jewish population aging, having fewer children, and declining in number. . . . Convicted Cuban spy **Ana Belen Montes** receives 25-year sentence, tells court: "I believe our government's policy toward Cuba is cruel and unfair, profoundly unneighborly, and I felt morally obligated to help the island defend itself from our efforts to impose our values and our political system upon it."

■ **Izzat Ibrahim**, vice president of Iraq's revolutionary command council: "Our leader, President Saddam Hussein, may God bless him, has won 100 percent of the votes." . . . Pope **John Paul II** says he intends to serve in papacy until end of life, rather than retire owing to health problems. . . . Canadian immigration minister **Denis Coderre**: "We need to create more magnets for immigration everywhere. It's a matter of population growth, labor supply, quality of life, the very future of our country."

■ **Dennis Miller** on Iraq, in *Seattle Times*: "I think we should invade tomorrow. I think we should put it on Pay-Per-View and sell bobble-head dolls. And you know something? I would make our demands on Hussein really incredibly specific. I'd say, 'Listen, pal, I want you to shave the left side of your mustache and I want you to go on Al Jazeera TV next week and dance like **Kevin Bacon** at the end of *Footloose*, or we're coming in.'" **NR**

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Reinventing Foreign Aid

Larry Diamond is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution and a professor by courtesy of political science and sociology at Stanford University.

September 11 brought home to Americans the need for a relentless global assault on terrorist networks and lawless regimes. But our national security also requires a global assault on poverty and development failure. Stagnant and failing states not only breed and harbor terrorism but also generate and spread civil wars, drug trafficking, organized crime, environmental catastrophe, infectious diseases, and refugee flows.

These diverse security threats spring from the failure of scores of countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East to achieve vigorous, sustainable, and broadly distributed development. The threat to global order does not come from poverty alone. It comes from states that do not function well in the public interest. And it stems from the frustration and humiliation of people who see their countries stagnate in corruption and injustice while Europe and America prosper.

Countries need help to develop, but the past approach—providing tens of billions of dollars in aid with no clear standards of performance—has not worked. Although aid has helped to improve health and living standards, it has failed to get at the root of underdevelopment. The core obstacle to economic development is not a lack of resources. It is bad—corrupt, abusive, wasteful, unaccountable—governance. **The key to generating development and building a more enduringly secure world is improving the way countries are governed.**

This key insight is now leading the Bush administration to reinvent foreign aid. This past March, President George W. Bush proposed the first significant increase in U.S. development assistance in a decade. The increased funds will go into a special Millennium Challenge Account, to be allocated to a limited number of countries that demonstrate a commitment to political and economic standards of good governance. President Bush proposes to provide $5 billion in additional funding by 2006 (a 50 percent increase over current development assistance).

A report released by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) goes further, seeing promoting effective democratic governance as central to fostering economic development. Hence, it proposes clearly linking foreign assistance to serious governmental reforms that will contain corruption and abuse of power. Where governments are truly rotten, the report suggests channeling assistance primarily through nongovernmental sources, working with other bilateral aid donors and multilateral aid agencies to establish clear governance standards for aid and coordinating pressure on bad, recalcitrant governments. Furthermore, it proposes to spend a larger portion of U.S. foreign aid on democracy and governance priorities: controlling corruption, institutionalizing the rule of law, invigorating political parties, and strengthening civil society.

This is the beginning of a new "tough love" approach to foreign aid. If we fund these initiatives adequately while holding to serious standards of governance, and if we pursue in other realms of our foreign policy the same commitment to promoting democracy and improving governance, we can turn the corner on poverty and hopelessness in the world, which would be a huge contribution to our national security.

— Larry Diamond

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

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Many people think of fiber as roughage or bulk which must be eaten in large quantities. In actual fact, in its purest form, fiber is a powder and very little pure fiber is required every day. The reason lies in its ability to absorb many times its own weight in water. Thus, a small amount creates an effective bulk in your intestines where it acts as an *intestinal regulator,* maintaining a smooth flow of nutrients with proper opportunity for their absorption. Fiber itself is not a nutrient. Its definitive characteristic is that it passes through the intestines intact while the nutrients with it absorb into the body.

Another very important misconception shared by most people is that all fiber is pretty much the same. In fact, there are a great many different fibers from many different sources with individual characteristics. They all come from one of three natural sources: grain, vegetable and fruit.

Broadly, fibers from grain are classified as *crude fiber.* Bran is the best known, but by no means the most desirable, of this group. Then there are the *dietary fibers* which include gums, pectins, hemicelluloses and polysaccharides. These are found primarily in fruits and vegetables and are quite different from crude fiber. They appear to have amazing properties. For example, apple pectin absorbs many different destructive materials from the intestinal tract. Pectin, in combination with guar, helps regulate the absorption rate of nutrients, especially sugar, spreading it over a longer period of time. The result is a slower rise in blood sugar level and a less rapid subsequent drop – a quality very important to diabetics and those with a tendency toward hypoglycemia.

It is unwise to try to get all your fiber from one source. Many people, who do need additional fiber, rely on bran – largely through ignorance of the variety of fibers with which nature has blessed us. Wheat-bran tends to accelerate the passage of food through the intestines. This can interfere with the proper absorption of nutrients. Even worse, it contains a lot of phytic acid which could bind with, and rob

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you of, calcium, magnesium, essential trace minerals and metals before they can be absorbed. It is a harsh type of fiber.

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This is why many doctors recommend psyllium-based products for ordinary constipation instead of laxatives. Constipation, in an otherwise normal person, is an almost certain indication of inadequate fiber intake and, consequently, denotes a gastrointestinal system which is functioning improperly. You should not take a laxative that is going to roar through your system overnight like an intestinal rotor-rooter. You want something that is going to maintain a normal transit time for food to pass through your body and make elimination regular and easy. Any artificial increase in this transit time defeats the function of your natural internal laboratory where all nutritional processes take place.

While fiber will solve most problems of constipation, it is equally effective in controlling simple diarrhea because it maintains the proper pace and bulk required for digestive function.

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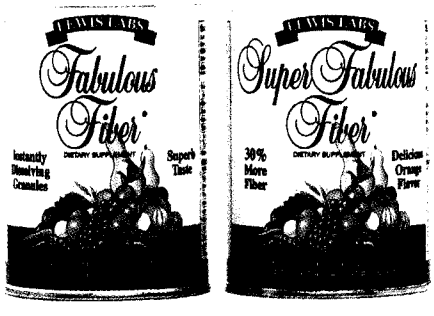

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THE WEEK

■ Australians and Americans fought together in all of the 20th century's wars—not just the popular crusades of the world wars (in each of which Australia fought longer than we did), but in the grim Cold War struggles of Korea and Vietnam. Australians fought with us in Afghanistan. Now, in the Bali disco bombings, al-Qaeda has struck Australian men and women in the way it prefers—without provocation, by stealth, murderously. Our hearts go out to a great and grieving nation.

■ No one knows how many innocent people the bombing killed, since so many bodies were burned. Approximately 100 young Australians died, as did at least seven Americans. The operation was an elegant Islamofascist strike—it killed Western revelers on a Hindu island; and by hurting the tourist industry, it will drive Indonesia's faltering economy yet further down, thus boosting the prospects of fanatical Islamist groups. Abu Bakar Bashir, the leader of one such group, Jemaah Islamiyah, blamed the bombing on Jews and Americans, praised Osama bin Laden, threatened Australia, and advised the families of the victims to convert to the religion of peace. Indonesia has denied American warnings that it harbored Islamists, though Muslim mobs have been killing native Christians there for years. The culture of Southeast Asia encourages conflict avoidance, until pent-up wrath breaks out in slaughter (running "amok" is a Malay term). So far, the Indonesian government has supplied the denial, and the Islamists the slaughter.

■ Can the Democrats be trusted with the country's defense? The congressional vote on Iraq provides mixed evidence. A majority of House Democrats voted against letting President Bush deal with the Iraqi threat. But all of the party's presidential hopefuls—Daschle, Gephardt, Kerry, Edwards, and Lieberman—voted with the president, as did all but one of its senators who are up for re-election this year. The exception was Paul Wellstone, who voted his peacenik convictions. Some of the hawks were voting their convictions, too; others, their ambitions. Lieberman is probably the only Democrat who, if he were president, might have chosen the same course as President Bush. The rest of the Democrats have proven that they are willing to authorize military action once a Republican president and the electorate force their hand. The Scoop Jackson wing of the party is still dead.

■ Been called "Talibanic" lately? If so, you must be a conservative Republican. That's the new trick: We are "Talibanic," or members of the "Taliban wing" of the Republican party. It's kind of an old trick, too. Back in the early 1980s, when Sam Donaldson discovered Hezbollah (as it was hijacking, kidnapping, murdering, and committing other mayhem), he delighted in referring to "the Hezbollah wing of the Republican party"—that meant all those GOP-ers who supported Reagan. Now the Taliban's "in." When Democrats say "Taliban wing," they smile like they're the first to have thought of it. But we have to ask: Who *was* it who fought, ruined, and banished the Taliban? Bunch of "Taliban Republicans," really, starting with the President of the United States.

■ Logic tells the mind that the risk of being shot by the Beltway sniper cannot be significantly greater than the risks of everyday activities—e.g., driving a car. But cars do not intend to crash themselves; the deaths and injuries on the road are accidental. The malignancy of the sniper makes him terrifying. His tarot cards and his request for money (if genuine) make it unlikely that he is a terrorist. But terrorists, or their copycats, may learn from him. Al-Qaeda and its patrons are surely sending other plans of murder our way. Americans must learn the virtues of daily stoicism—the right mixture of prudence and unconcern. We will do our best to hunt our enemies down. They are scum. The rest is in God's hands.

■ The sniper has called forth a Pavlovian response from liberals, who think his crimes illustrate the need for—of course—gun control. Kathleen Kennedy Townsend wants to ride the issue to victory in the Maryland gubernatorial race. Never mind the failure of the state's current Democratic administration to enforce existing gun laws. The cause du jour is "ballistic fingerprinting." Create a registry of fingerprints, and supposedly the police would be able to track a bullet to the gunowner who fired it. There are serious questions about the reliability of ballistic fingerprinting, but leave those aside (or see John R. Lott Jr.'s "Bullets and Bunkum," page 28). Registering new guns would still do nothing to deal with the over 200 million guns already in circulation in America. If liberals were willing to advocate the prohibition of long-range rifles, including the confiscation of those already owned, it would be possible for them to argue that their favored policies would stop the sniper in his tracks. We would still disagree with them. But at least their position would deserve respect, as it now does not.

■ A little more than a year after the September 11 attacks, Osama bin Laden is on the run or possibly dead, the financial base of al-Qaeda has been ruptured, and Afghanistan's Taliban government is no more. And yet, according to CIA director George Tenet, "the threat environment we find ourselves in today is as bad as it was last summer"—i.e., before the most fatal terrorist strikes in history. At least that's what

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Tenet told a congressional panel on October 17. This vague warning has the look of a self-administered inoculation: If something awful does happen in the near term, nobody can say Tenet didn't give us a heads-up. The warning must also be interpreted as a startling admission of failure. Tenet, a Clinton holdover, has directed central intelligence for five years; he says he declared "war" on bin Laden four years ago; and now he has had more than a year of almost limitless resources to protect Americans from a specific enemy. He insists that we are still no better off. It makes one wonder if we'd be better off without Tenet.

■ John Thune, running for the Senate in South Dakota, ran an ad making the point that incumbent Democrat Tim Johnson is weak on missile defense. Saddam Hussein's picture flashes on the screen as an example of the kind of menace against whom Johnson would leave America defenseless. Johnson calls the ad "despicable," charging that it links him to the dictator and questions his patriotism. It does neither. The announcer in the ad says, "Is this a question of patriotism? No. It's a question of judgment." What Johnson is attempting here is to take military issues off the table. Patriotism, it seems, has become the first refuge of anti-defense Democrats. Thune should double his ad buy.

■ Also in South Dakota, the FBI and the state attorney general's office have opened an investigation on several Indian reservations where the Democratic party appears to have registered an unusual number of dead or non-existent people. The Democrats already have fired one of their get-out-the-vote coordinators, Becky Red-Earth Villeda, for her role in the deception. There's something refreshing about a voter-fraud probe occurring *before* an election. It would be even more refreshing if this one resulted in some actual prosecutions. If South Dakota doesn't work out, there's always neighboring Minnesota. The website for the Democratic Socialists of America recently advertised a "national election project" to "bring young people to Minnesota," which has same-day registration and where Democratic senator Paul Wellstone "will need a high percentage of young people to register and vote for him." Ever since the narrow election in Florida two years ago, many Democrats have pushed for reforms at the federal level. A more efficacious way to improve the electoral system would be for them to reform their own party.

■ Georgia Right to Life has rescinded its endorsement of Republican Senate candidate Saxby Chambliss because Chambliss believes that abortion should be legal when pregnancies result from rape or incest. The organization's position is more logically consistent with pro-life principles than that of Chambliss. But pro-lifers are morally obligated to uphold their principles in ways that actually advance them, and determining what those ways are requires political judgment based on the circumstances of the day. Rape and incest account for less than 2 percent of all abortions, and we are dauntingly far away from a ban on the other 98 percent. A ban on abortion in cases of rape and incest isn't on the table or close to it. (Neither, for that matter, are bans on abortifacient contraceptives and in vitro fertilization as it is currently practiced, two other things that a consistent pro-lifer would support.) Chambliss's opponent will not countenance a ban even on *partial-birth* abortion. If the abolitionists had followed the Georgia example, they would have withheld support from candidates who, though opposing slavery, refused to extend full civil rights to blacks. Georgia Right to Life's imprudence sets back its goal. Pro-lifers face enough difficulties without adding to them.

■ Medical marijuana has crossed the radar screen of billionaire and Independence party candidate for governor of New York Tom Golisano, who has devoted some of the tens of millions of dollars he is spending on his race to TV ads promoting the idea. Opportunism? Sure. But in our system political players are supposed to be driven by felt needs, and nowhere is the need for drug-law reform greater than in New York, which still labors under the rigid and onerous penalties for drug-related offenses imposed 30 years ago by Gov. Nelson Rockefeller. Giving doctors and patients the freedom to use marijuana to alleviate the symptoms and side-effects of grueling treatment would be a small but salutary change.

■ When President Bush addressed the United Nations on Iraq, throwing the record of Iraqi violations of its resolutions in its face, it seemed like dialectical jujitsu. But the weeks since have been more like sumo wrestling, as the massive unwillingness of the U.N. to act has caused us to yield point after point. The latest giveaway was announced by Colin Powell, who made it sound as though regime change were no longer our goal, and that human rights, threats to Iraq's neighbors, and attacks on American and British aircraft counted for nothing: "The major issue before us is disarmament." Now we are hoping to get the Security Council to agree to a watered-down resolution threatening "serious consequences" if Iraq fails to cooperate with inspectors. But France wants a two-step process, with another Security Council meeting to follow an Iraqi failure. The reason inspectors have anything to inspect, however, is that Iraq has already failed to disarm itself, as it promised after the Gulf War. France and Russia wish to block action in order to frustrate America, and to preserve economic deals with Iraq. Meanwhile we surrender our security in an effort to please the unpleasable, who wish to defend the indefensible.

■ In a move that joined the desperation of a wanted man with the caprice of ancient Rome, Saddam Hussein emptied Iraq's prisons of common criminals and some political prisoners, and announced a general amnesty. Of course there were exceptions, "Zionist and American spies" among them. But tens of thousands of Iraqis were released. Saddam aims to show the world, and his own people, what a great guy he is. But as jubilant prisoners rushed to stunned relatives, both equally unable to believe their good fortune, an odd portent showed itself in the carnival atmosphere: One guard gave a thumbs-up to an American photographer and said, "Bush!

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Bush!" Crude personal diplomacy—or a sign of what may happen if the lid truly comes off?

■ It is little remembered now, but Iraq was a *place d'armes* in both world wars, with the British pushing north up the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates to secure the Mesopotamian oilfields from control by the Turks (1914–18), or from seizure by the Germans (1939–45). As a result, there are 54,000 British and Commonwealth military dead buried at 13 cemeteries scattered across Iraq. These cemeteries are now being systematically desecrated by the Iraqi authorities. At one such place on the outskirts of Basra, 60-odd stone plaques inscribed with the names of the dead have been pulled down and smashed. At North Gate cemetery in Baghdad, where thousands of British and Indian troops lie at rest, graffiti cover the mausoleum of Gen. Sir Stanley Maude, who died of cholera shortly after routing the Turks and capturing the city in 1917. Knowing what chance their armies will stand at the hands of living allied troops, it seems that the Iraqis have decided to take what satisfaction they can from insulting the dead.

■ The news from Pakistan continues to be distressing. In the recent elections, Islamist parties made big gains. President Musharraf has suppressed moderate secular parties that could be a counterweight to the fundamentalists, in order to consolidate his military rule. Furthermore, Musharraf may be quietly backing off his cooperation with the U.S.—even as he is overwhelmingly identified as a U.S.-sponsored dictator. So, it's just possible that we will get the worst of all worlds in Pakistan. Someone should remind Musharraf that if he's not truly "our SOB," well then . . . he's just an SOB.

■ In Northern Ireland, the Good Friday Agreement of 1998, which the Clinton administration threw its weight behind, is in a state of suspension. A police raid on the offices of Sinn Fein revealed that the party's inclusion in the power-sharing executive set up under the agreement had proved an irresistible temptation to gather secret information—including transcripts of taped conversations between Tony Blair and George W. Bush. (Sinn Fein's code name for Blair turned out to be: Naïve Idiot.) The secret information was probably passed on to the armed terrorist gangs for whom Sinn Fein acts as a respectable front. Palestine, Korea, Ireland: The common denominator in all these "peace-making" efforts was a belief that dictators and terrorists could be trusted to keep their word—could, in fact, be *civilized* by being drawn into the normal process of democracy and rational diplomacy. That belief has now been proved to be as incontrovertibly false as the phlogiston theory of combustion.

■ If the Nobel Peace Prize is getting you down, you can always think of the Civil Courage Prize. This is the award established in New York by John Train, who was inspired by the example of Alexander Solzhenitsyn. The great man, in fact, serves on the foundation's board. The prize is meant to honor "steadfast resistance to evil at great personal risk." This year, it went to a Cuban dissident, Vladimiro Roca Antunez. An honorable mention went to another Cuban dissident, Gustavo Arcos Bergnes. Further on the Cuban front, Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet—yet another great Cuban—was, at the time of writing, set to be released from one of Castro's dungeons on October 31. His wife expressed her thanks to supporters in the United States, saying, "This has been a very tough period in our lives, but human solidarity has brought enormous spiritual compensation." Meanwhile, many other prisoners, such as the blind lawyer and "independent librarian" Juan Carlos Gonzalez Leiva, still endure their tortures. And Barbara Walters recently had a nice chat with Fidel Castro, continuing the flirtation she began in the '70s. Human-rights and democracy activists wailed in pain and outrage. But then, they should be used to it.

■ In a referendum on October 19, the people of Ireland voted Yes to the Treaty of Nice, which provides for the entry of ten new countries—mainly from Central and Eastern Europe—into the EU, and for a unified European military. The Irish had shaken up the Eurocrats a year before by voting No on the same treaty. The issues for the Irish were: their cherished neutrality in military matters, fear of mass immigration from poorer countries, loss of influence in a larger union, and the gradually-emerging picture of the "restructured" EU as an Anglo-Franco-Italo-German consortium in which smaller countries count for very little. In between last year's No and this year's Yes, a concession had been made on military matters. Ireland's fiercely pro–EU establishment, determined not to be embarrassed again, had spent vast sums of money on the Yes campaign—outspending the Noes around ten to one. For all that, only 30 percent of voters said Yes, 18 percent said No, and 52 percent stayed home. These figures, coming from a nation that has perhaps benefited from EU membership more than any other, say something striking about the appeal of the European project in its current incarnation. Is this lack of enthusiasm shared in other EU nations? We do not know: Only Ireland, because of a quirk in her constitution, was obliged to hold a referendum.

■ Democracy is a core value for the nations of the EU, right? And there are few more brazen enemies of democracy than Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe, right? It is therefore not surprising that the EU has banned Mugabe and his cronies from traveling to its member nations. Excellent—a blow for democratic principles. But wait: Here is an organization called the Southern African Development Community, a sort of black EU embracing 14 southern African nations. Zimbabwe is a member. The EU wants to hold a meeting with the SADC, to discuss food aid and joint projects. The meeting was to take place in Denmark, an EU member nation. Zimbabwe wanted to attend. Uh-oh. But this kind of thing is no problem for those worldly, pragmatic Europeans: The EU merely moved the meeting to Mozambique, so that Mugabe's man could take part. Thank goodness those simplistic, moralizing Americans weren't involved!

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■ Last issue, we reported on the international racism conference held in Barbados—intended as a follow-up to the U.N. Durban conference—where attendees voted to expel non-blacks from the proceedings (it was too painful to discuss the slave trade in front of the children of the oppressors). Now the organizers have come running back to master, begging white businessmen to pay off the conference's debt of $100,000. Well, not begging, exactly: "If [whites] don't see fit to contribute, then I would be asking black people to think very carefully about how they would spend their money," thundered the president of the Congress Against Racism. And so the conference had a fitting end.

■ In 1960 Harold Macmillan, then prime minister of Britain, made his famous and happily "progressive" Winds of Change speech, welcoming de-colonization, which has turned out to have extraordinarily mixed results. Last August, the island republic of Jamaica celebrated the 40th anniversary of its independence from Britain. A Jamaican newspaper conducted a poll that now has become a subject of outrage and indignation. Omigod, 53 percent replied that the country would have been better off had it remained a British colony, while only 15 percent thought it would have been worse off. Meanwhile in Zimbabwe . . .

■ In the preface to his mighty *Dictionary*, Samuel Johnson scoffed at those who thought that such a work ought to fix the language once and for all: "To enchain syllables, and to lash the wind, are equally the undertakings of pride, unwilling to measure its desires by its strength." Johnson's preface is apparently not much studied in Romania, where the language of everyday life has been taking in loan-words from English at a fair clip these past few years: "hot dog," "laptop," "show business," and, inevitably, "cool." Parliamentarians in Bucharest have now passed a law insisting that any foreign words spoken at a public event be accompanied by a Romanian translation. The humble hot dog must now be referred to, at least in public, by a Romanian phrase meaning: "a kind of sausage in a kind of roll." The French, of course, have been fighting this battle for decades, with little success. It seems to be an obsession with nations whose language is derived from (or, in the case of Romania, more probably just influenced by) Latin—a last rearguard action against the barbarian invasions of the 5th century, perhaps. In Romania's case, we can look on this nonsense with smiling indulgence. Just 13 years ago the Romanians were groaning under the heel of the odious Ceausescu dictatorship. Now at least they have a real parliament, free to debate frivolities like this.

■ Nobody does bad taste like the Germans—which language was it that gave us "kitsch," after all? German bad taste met German anti-Americanism in October at the Hamburg apartment where Mohamed Atta and his colleagues planned the September 11 attacks. A group of avant-garde German artists put on an exhibition of paintings, videos, and writing at the apartment at Marienstrasse 54, in a district where tensions between Muslim immigrants and longtime German residents run high. Noting the inappropriateness of the whole thing, a local politician ventured the opinion that the artists were merely trying to get some publicity for themselves. Oh, surely not!

■ By the time she was crowned Miss America in September, Erika Harold had taken her pro-abstinence message to some 14,000 teens as a spokesman for Project Reality. When she won, however, contest officials—uncomfortable with Harold's social conservatism (she's also pro-life)—tried to pressure her into adopting a less controversial campaign: against teen violence and bullying. But Harold refused to be, well, bullied. "If I don't speak about it now as Miss America," she explained, "I will be disappointing the thousands of young people . . . who need assurance that waiting until marriage for sex is the right thing to do." There was a brief standoff, and the organizers caved. Miss Harold is to be commended for her integrity, of course, but we can't help feeling saddened by her experience. In 1998, contest officials didn't worry that taxpayer-subsidized condoms—the cause of that year's Miss America—would stir up controversy. You can say anything to teens about sex today, it would seem, unless it's that they shouldn't be having it.

■ The Vatican told the American Catholic bishops to rework their "zero-tolerance" policy for priestly sexual abuse, proposing a commission of four American bishops and four Vatican officials to study the matter. The Vatican called abuse of minors "particularly abhorrent," but appeared to be worried that the American approach considered priests guilty by accusation. They are right to be worried. For years the American bishops acted as though all priests were worth protecting; now they would throw all to the wolves. What American Catholics need from their bishops is leadership. The best service the Vatican can do at this stage would be to discipline those bishops who have most conspicuously failed their flocks.

Wellstone Must Fall

Like Rome when purple lost its vogue,
Or Humpty-Dumpty, who
Was one dumb egg to climb that wall,
Wellstone must tumble, too—
A drag on Minnesota and
THE most left-leaning pol
Inside the Beltway: that's why he's
My martyred voodoo doll.

—W. H. von Dreele

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■ Bill Clinton used black people all through his presidency. This was especially true when he was in hot water. As Roger Wilkins said during the Lewinsky scandal, "He knows that if he goes to see black people, he's going to get a warm bath." When Toni Morrison came along and declared Clinton "our first black president," it must have been his finest moment. He has always counted on his black support to validate him as a human being; this support has always been central to his self-esteem. He may be an adulterer, a charlatan, and a liar, but, by golly, black citizens—the holiest Americans—love him, and therefore he must be okay. The folks who run the Arkansas Black Hall of Fame recently inducted him: as its first white member. This, then—as he must see it—is his finest moment. But he's still a louse.

■ The president in the previous administration may have been black, but, for some, the *real* blacks in the current administration aren't nearly black enough. Harry Belafonte kicked up a ruckus when he tarred Colin Powell and Condoleezza Rice as "house slaves" serving the "master," President Bush. In black America, there's pretty much nothing worse you can call someone than a "house slave"—it is beyond Tom. Powell and Rice responded with extreme, and customary, grace. Powell said, "I'm serving my nation, I'm serving this president: my president, our president." Condi Rice said, "If Harry Belafonte disagrees with my political views, that's fine. That's a conversation that is worth having. We're Americans. . . . But I don't need Harry Belafonte to tell me what it means to be black." No, indeed. Funny that Harry Belafonte should be calling *other* people minstrels. He was not a minstrel, though—just a singer, doing his job. But he has now shown himself to be a racial poisoner. And a real horse's ass.

■ On 60 *Minutes*, Jerry Falwell delivered himself of the opinion that the Prophet Mohammad was a man of violence. Asked whether he thought Mohammad was a "terrorist," Falwell answered yes. This quickly led to a Muslim riot in India, resulting in the death of nine people. Then, the Iranian government issued a *fatwa* against Falwell. Said an Islamic-affairs representative of that country's supreme leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, "The death of that man is a religious duty." Falwell later issued an apology, but it probably won't help—the contract is out. But what an odd way of objecting to the assertion that Islam is violent: to go out and kill.

■ In a ruling this June, the Supreme Court upheld the right of public schools to conduct random drug tests not only for sports teams, but also for non-athletic extracurricular groups such as chess clubs. Now, according to the Associated Press, some districts are charting newer territory by administering urine tests to catch students who smoke cigarettes. "Tobacco is illegal for them to have—it's also a health and safety issue," one administrator explains. "We've got a responsibility to let the kids know the dangers of tobacco use." If only they had a responsibility to let the kids know the dangers of illiteracy.

■ VH1 is blazing new paths in grotesqueness with its show *Music Behind Bars*, each episode of which focuses on a prison band. The billing for the show is at least honest in its thugophilia: "Murderers. Rapists. Thieves. Guitarists. Drummers. For many prison inmates, making music is the only taste of freedom they'll ever get." Last we checked, limiting freedom was sort of the point of imprisonment. For victims and their families, things could not get much worse than this: that, with a boost from VH1 and the prison administrators who allowed this to go through, murderers and rapists are being made into rock stars. That's VH1, doing its part to glorify the most violent predators in America.

■ Historian Stephen E. Ambrose died, age 66. His first book, on Gen. Henry Halleck, Lincoln's chief of staff, caught the eye of Dwight Eisenhower, himself a former staff officer. Ambrose's multi-volume biography of Ike launched him as a major historian. In the Nineties, he reached a huge public with books on Lewis and Clark, the transcontinental railroad, and, most memorably, the soldiers who won the Second World War. Ambrose caught some flak when it turned out that several of the quoted passages in one of these last volumes, though footnoted, had not been placed within quotation marks in the text, as they should have been. The criticism was justified. But it was also fueled, in part, by professional envy of his success, and by academic discomfort with his admiring attitude toward many of his subjects. One hero helped him in the last year of his life. Diagnosed with lung cancer, he continued to write, inspired by the example of Ulysses Grant, who produced his *Personal Memoirs* during his losing battle with throat cancer. R.I.P.

NORTH KOREA

Proliferation

To the surprise of no one but the veterans of the Clinton administration, North Korea turns out to have a nuclear-weapons program. In 1994, Clinton, with an assist from Nobel Prize-winner Jimmy Carter, struck a deal in which Pyongyang was to stop developing nuclear arms in exchange for U.S. aid, including help in building "peaceful" nuclear reactors. The deal was struck because the Clintonites were unwilling to risk a military confrontation with North Korea—a fact that they more or less openly admitted. North Korea's response was to pocket our aid and keep on trying to get nukes. The worst the Clinton administration ever did in response to North Korean provocations—including a missile lobbed over Japan—was to label the regime a "state of concern" (unless, that is, the sending of Madeleine Albright to croon for Kim Jong Il was meant as a punishment). When the Bush administration asked them about intelligence reports on their nuclear program, the North Koreans admitted their breach of the agreement and declared it null and void.

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There goes the last of the Clinton administration's great alleged foreign-policy achievements. Momentum on free trade stalled even before Clinton left office. The peace process in Northern Ireland is unraveling, and the one in Israel and Palestine . . . well, everyone knows how that's turned out. In each of these areas—as in North Korea, as in Iraq—Clinton's accomplishment was, at best, to kick the can down the road a few years.

That still seems to be the foreign-policy ideal of liberals. The lesson they have drawn from the North Korean revelations is that we ought to kick the can down the road on Iraq. Bush isn't treating North Korea's nukes as a reason for war; so, the argument goes, there is no cause to use force in Iraq because it is merely trying to attain nuclear weapons.

To the (considerable) extent that North Korea's weapons inhibit us from attacking it, that's an argument for preventing Iraq from following its example. The doves have scoffed at the idea that a nuclear-armed Saddam Hussein might be able to blackmail the United States into changing its foreign policy. In 1994, North Korea blackmailed us without nukes. And it's deterring us from acting now.

Which is not to say that an invasion of North Korea would in fact be advisable. Even superpowers have to pick their battles, or at least the timing of them. Iraq is an easier target than North Korea; it can be taken with less risk; and regime change there has the potential upside of changing a regional political culture that currently promotes a potent and deadly brand of anti-Americanism. A side-benefit of successful action in Iraq would be that it would frighten America's enemies elsewhere, including in Pyongyang.

The immediate imperative is for the administration to cut off aid to North Korea, as it is doing, and to persuade our allies to do the same. Bellicose rhetoric should, at least for the moment, be avoided. Ultimately, however, there can be no avoiding the conclusion that to protect both our regional allies and ourselves, it will be necessary to see regime change in North Korea.

THE TERROR VISAS

Waving Them Through

FOR more than a year, the CIA and FBI have suffered much criticism for the intelligence breakdowns leading up to September 11, and specifically for their failure to "connect the dots." Surely these agencies have much to answer for. So does the Department of State, which has escaped similar scrutiny. It is responsible for letting those deadly "dots"—i.e., the 19 terrorists—into the country in the first place.

As Joel Mowbray reported in the last issue of NR, at least 15 of the visas issued to the hijackers should have been denied under laws existing at the time. An independent investigation by the General Accounting Office has now confirmed this sobering fact—and added a few appalling details to the picture. In fiscal year 2001, for instance, the State Department granted visas to 79 people it knew to be on the FBI's terrorist watch list because "it determined there was insufficient information linking [these visa applicants] to terrorism." The State Department shouldn't second-guess the judgments of the FBI, let alone act like a coven of ACLU staff attorneys fretting over whether "suspicions" are grounds for exclusion.

Secretary of State Powell has called the consular officers who issue visas the "first line of defense in protecting ourselves from those who would come to our shores." This is true only if consular officers and their superiors regard themselves as defenders tasked with keeping terrorists out. As it stands, the people who issue visas are overworked junior-level bureaucrats who receive little training and perform without incentives to keep out risks. If they deny too many visa applications, they are assumed to be doing something wrong. They are so neglected, in fact, that as of last spring the State Department still had not interviewed any of the individuals who actually approved the 9/11 terrorists' visas—including the one who approved ten of them. This is not the sign of a department desiring to improve its abysmal performance.

Neither is the selection of Maura Harty as the next head of Consular Affairs. Rather than finding a candidate with a proven commitment to change, the administration has reached within its bowels for a departmental insider. At least one senator has placed a hold on her nomination, and rightly so.

Consular officers should be guards first and diplomats second. Their primary duty is to keep out immediate and potential threats, rather than worry about how foreigners view our rules and procedures. If current State Department officials aren't interested in meeting their obligations, we need some new officials.

THE NOBEL PRIZE

Carter's Disgrace

FORMER president Jimmy Carter's Nobel Peace Prize came with a booby prize for President George W. Bush. The official citation contrasted Carter with "a situation currently marked by threats of the use of power." Gunnar Berge, the chairman of the Norwegian prize committee, spelled it out for the slow: The award "should be interpreted as a criticism of the line that the current [American] administration is taking toward Iraq." If George Bush shuts down Iraq as he has the Taliban, the world will be a safer place, but don't expect the Norwegians to notice.

Carter's comment on the matter captured the man. "I feel very strongly about" Iraq, he said (he is, of course, opposed to enforcing disarmament). "But I didn't think it was appropriate to mention it. I haven't spent the last 22 years walking around saying what I would or wouldn't do if I were still president." But that is exactly what Carter has done, setting himself up as a pious counterexample to Republican presidents, and a nagging offstage adviser to Democrat Bill Clinton. Carter's comment maintained a false front of propriety,

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over a proud, corrupt substance. Whited sepulchers, anyone?

The perfect comment on Carter's peacemaking came when North Korea followed the announcement of his award by announcing that it has nuclear weapons—in violation of a deal brokered by Carter in 1994. We see now where Carter's acumen led.

Jimmy Carter's pilgrimages to world hot spots follow a depressing pattern. He shows up, like a twelve-step intervener—except that he does not require his hosts, usually despots, to make any fundamental changes. In return for small, or illusory, concessions, he gives them favorable publicity, and dollops of self-esteem. Nations tell white lies and deal with rogues all the time, but a freelance liar and gladhander lacks the power to offer concrete bribes or threats.

Carter's main achievement, cited by the Nobel Committee, took place when he was president: finalizing the peace accords known as "Camp David." But the instigators of this agreement were Anwar Sadat and Menachem Begin, who had largely worked out their deal before showing up in the Maryland woods.

When Bill Clinton began his retirement with the scandal of his midnight pardons, he was compared unflatteringly to Jimmy Carter. Let us hope Clinton keeps on partying and collecting speaker fees. One pernicious busybody is enough.

■ NOTES & ASIDES ■

■ Dear Bill: It seems to me that politics has become much too solemn and journalism too self-satisfied. So I am hoping that you will find relief in two pieces of verse.

I confess to authorship of the first. The second was written decades ago by Humbert Wolfe, though he indicts the "British journalist," whereas I have taken the liberty to substitute the "Beltway journalist."

Caligula, they say, was mad,
Which made the Romans very sad.
Where other Caesars buggered boys
Or fed the lions Jews and goys,
Caligula, with no remorse,
Enriched the Senate with his horse.
This precedent is honored still
(Just look about you on the Hill)
Except that now our voting classes
Limit themselves to horses' asses.

And:

You cannot hope to bribe or twist
Thank God! The Beltway journalist.
But, seeing what the man will do
Unbribed, there's no occasion to.

I quoted Wolfe's verse to a friend on the *New York Times*, but he was not amused.

As ever yours,
Ralph [de Toledano]
Washington, D.C.

Dear Ralph: Fun! Thanks.

Bill

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: I'm afraid that Dale E. Elliott (July 29) misconceived his question and misdirected his inquiry in his search for the name of a "sort of bad argument."

He should consult *Webster's Seventh*, which gives several meanings for the word "bless": to hallow or consecrate by religious rite or word; to make the sign of the cross upon; to invoke divine care for; to praise, glorify; to confer prosperity or happiness upon; to protect, preserve.

He should then direct his inquiry to the columnist for the National Episcopal Church newspaper who implied that divorce should be blessed and ask which meaning of the word was intended.

Respectfully,
Kalman I. Nulman
New York, N.Y.

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: My condolences to you and the friends and family of Gertrude Vogt (July 15), who sounds—and looks—like a lovely woman.

But, "she went off to live in San Francisco, *near to* her son in Sacramento"? Don't you mean "*near* her son" or "*close to* her son"? "Near to" is oddly omitted from my *Fowler's Modern English*, but it offends the ear, if not the other senses.

Can *near to* be, pardon the pun, right?

Yours truly,
Frederic C. Marston
Princeton, N.J.

Dear Mr. Marston: I dunno, you're a little sneaky, suggesting that Fowler proscribes *near to*. Fowler did suggest there was motion here; nearby, in the use of near. "[The] use of *near* in the sense of 'approximating in kind or degree' has returned to some extent, especially qualifying nouns, e.g., *near-beer, near-wool, near-communist.* The OED Supp. calls this revival 'chiefly U.S.,' but it is now common in Britain too. It should not be confused with the use of the adjective *near* in such a phrase as *a near miss.* A near miss (unhyphenated) is a miss that was nearly a hit; near-beer (hyphenated) is a beverage that professes to be nearly beer."

Your use of Fowler, causing my own visit to the shrine, makes mine a near to perfect day.

Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: Re the misuse of "anniversary" (July 15): With no success whatsoever, I have tried for years to introduce "menseversary" to indicate a monthly recurrence. Perhaps you have a workable idea.

Richard P. Ebbert
Pasadena, Calif.

Dear Mr. Ebbert: I don't, actually. But with no hard feelings, I don't much like yours. Neologisms have to be almost immediately appealing. Maybe that's why you haven't had much luck in popularizing yours.

Cordially,

—WFB

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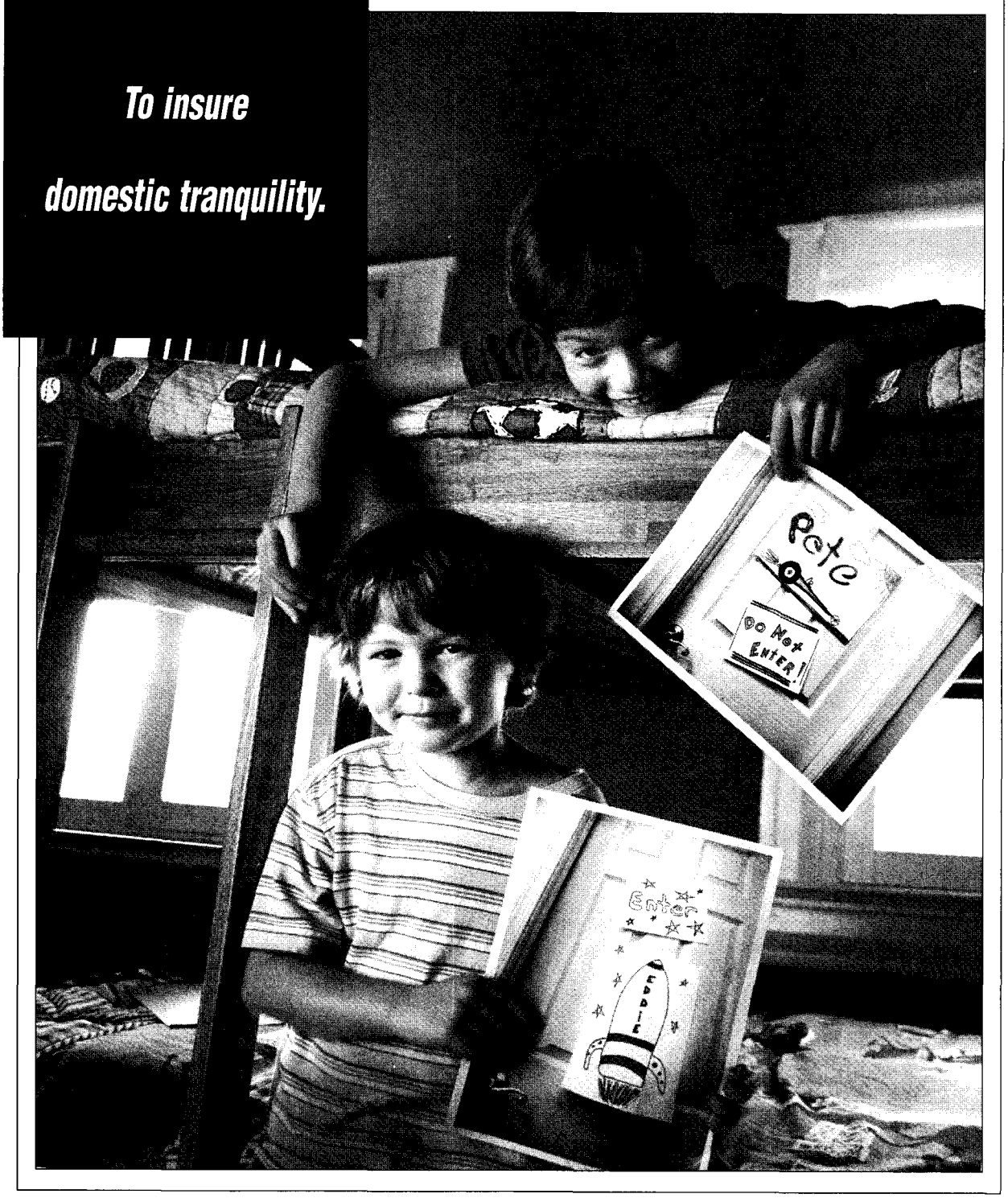

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■ CAMPAIGN '02 ■

They're All Bushies Now?

In a lot of states, Daschle Democrats are thin on the ground

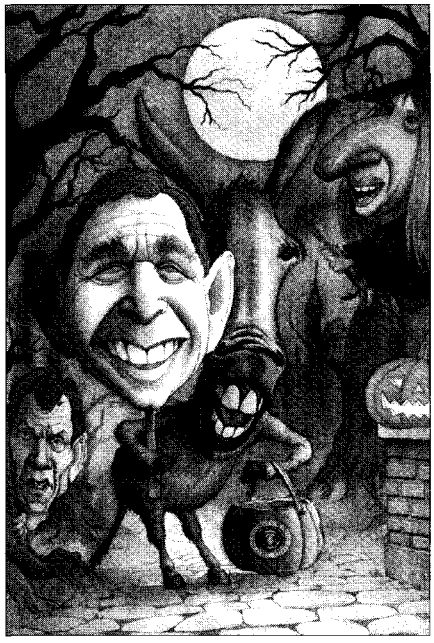
KATE O'BEIRNE

THE politician appearing most frequently in campaign ads this election season won't be appearing on any ballots. Candidate A features President Bush at a signing ceremony in a TV spot that takes credit for "working with President Bush to pass historic new tax cuts." Another of his ads includes a clip of the president praising him for helping to pass a trade bill. Candidate B is pictured visiting with President Bush in the Oval Office and highlights his support of the president's education reforms. Candidate C explains that he helped Bush reduce welfare rolls. Candidate D brags that the farm bill he backed won "the signature of President Bush," and Candidate E wants voters to know that she "voted for President Bush's defense budget."

Members of a popular president's party could be expected to showcase their leader—but these candidates who are so closely hugging the president on the campaign trail are *Democrats*: in Montana, Georgia, Texas, Iowa, and Missouri. In this year's competitive races, Bush Democrats are far more plentiful than Daschle Democrats.

"No matter what happens, we're going to have a Bush majority," Mitch Bainwol, the executive director of the National Republican Senatorial Committee, whimsically notes in response to the ubiquitous presence of President Bush in the ads of Democratic Senate candidates. "The only question is whether or not it's a real one."

In a recent appearance in Atlanta to boost the chances of a real Bush majority, the president acknowledged the Democrats' clutch for his coattails. "A couple of citizens from this great state told me my picture seems to be on the TV screen a lot. That a lot of people are using my image during the campaign. Well, I'm here to clarify a few things."



He went on to provide some nice tape footage for Sen. Max Cleland's GOP challenger. "The voters shouldn't be confused. For the sake of Georgia, for the sake of the United States, Saxby Chambliss needs to be the next United States senator."

Cleland—the "Candidate B" whose ads feature his photo with Bush—touts his support for the president's education reforms and tax cuts, and blankets the airwaves with testimonials from the state's popular junior senator, conservative Democrat Zell Miller. Rep. Chambliss says he expects that the facts will trump the photos. "When Max Cleland was elected [to replace Sam Nunn], folks thought they were sending another conservative Democrat to Washington. We've shown how liberal his voting record is." Chambliss is referring to a series of 10-second ads in which his campaign highlighted Cleland's liberal votes on issues ranging from abortion and the Boy Scouts to taxes. While Cleland did vote for Bush's tax cut, Republican ads claim that he has supported 116 tax increases; and Chambliss hammers away at the fact that while "Zell Miller sides with the president on homeland security, Cleland sides with the union bosses." There has not been a Senate vote on final passage of Bush's homeland-security plan, but the GOP ads highlight eleven votes Cleland cast against it in committee and on the Senate floor.

In his appearance on behalf of Georgia GOP candidates, Bush criticized the Senate's failure to make his tax cuts permanent, to pass an energy bill, and to approve the homeland-security department. His declaration that the Senate had a "lousy record" on confirming his judicial nominees won the crowd's loudest applause. Bush even took a rare partisan jab by specifying that it is "Senate Democrats" who want to prevent his proposed new federal department from having the needed flexibility to hire, transfer, and fire employees.

Gene Ulm, the Chambliss campaign's pollster, isn't surprised that Cleland is trying to run a "George Bush and me" campaign—given that the president enjoys a 70 percent approval rating in Georgia, with more than 50 percent of Georgians "strongly" approving. Ulm believes that Tom Daschle's sharp criticisms of the president's Iraq policy were a mistake because he appeared to be politicizing the national-security debate; Ulm's tracking polls indicate that the sympathetic visit to Baghdad by Congressmen Bonior and McDermott hurt the party among traditional southern Democrats.

Missouri senator Jean Carnahan trumpets her support for President Bush's defense budget, tax cuts, and Iraq resolution—and apparently has felt jilted, because Bush is enthusiastically supporting her challenger, former congressman Jim Talent. Carnahan recently had to apologize for saying that the White House couldn't get Osama bin Laden so they were out to get her instead; defending herself, she pleaded frustration that despite her votes in favor of some of the president's priorities, the White House was inexplicably focused on defeating her.

In Louisiana, Sen. Mary Landrieu's

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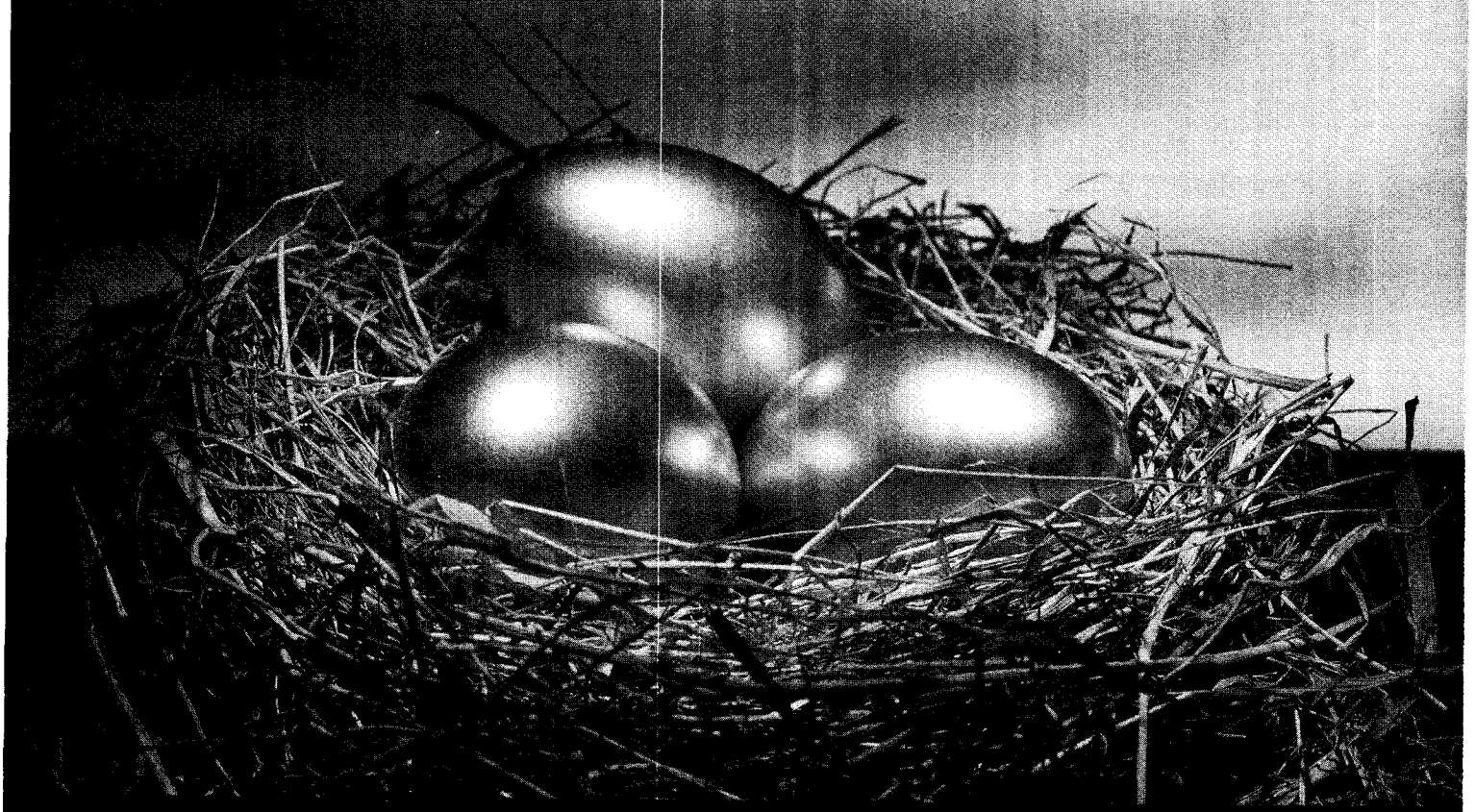

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ads declare that she "voted with President Bush 74 percent of the time." She takes credit for supporting the Bush tax cut and for "leading the fight against human cloning." Montana senator Max Baucus is running ads with footage showing Bush signing "historic new tax cuts," and a commercial for Ron Kirk, the Democratic Senate nominee in Texas, declares that he supports the president on taxes, education, the war on terrorism, and faith-based initiatives.

■

Whichever party prevails in November, Bush's coattails will deserve part of the credit.

■

Democratic candidates' professed admiration for the Bush agenda has much to do with the geography of this year's elections: Many Democrats are running in the "red states" that Bush carried in 2000. While Republicans have adopted a prescription-drug-benefit plan to defend against a Democratic proposal, the Bush Democrats are giving up much more ideological territory: They endorse the president's agenda on multiple issues including tax cuts, education, and national security, where there are no clear Democratic alternatives. This campaign strategy represents a complete repudiation of the Democratic party's most loyal supporters—who angrily nurse their grievances over the Florida recount and entertain each other by recounting verbal gaffes by a president they persist in seeing as not up to the job. But the incumbents seeking re-election as Bush Democrats aren't just running away from the president's most strident critics to avoid any taint of being Streisand Democrats; they are also repudiating Tom Daschle's decision to run the Senate as though he presided over a wholly "blue state" caucus and thus courted no political trouble by blocking Bush's agenda.

Can they get away with it? There is a clear disconnect between how Bush Democrats are portraying themselves in their campaigns and the argument being made on their behalf by their party leaders in Washington. Congresswoman Nita Lowey of New York, who heads the House Democrats' campaign committee, maintains that Democrats must reclaim the House in order to provide "a firm Democratic check on President Bush and the Republicans." Lowey's message might play well back home in New York, but it's not what voters want to hear in Georgia. In a recent editorial endorsing Saxby Chambliss, the *Marietta Daily Journal* pointed out that "a vote for Cleland . . . is tantamount to a vote for leaving the Senate in control of the Democrats."

The Senate might well remain in control of the Democrats—but whichever party prevails in November, George W. Bush's coattails will deserve part of the credit. The political calculation Bush Democrats are making is obvious, but Republican adman Alex Castellanos also points to a kind of Clinton fatigue: "I can understand why Democrats are doing it. It's been a long time since they've had a president they could love." **NR**

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■ **CAMPAIGN '02** ■

The Liberalest Senator

Can the GOP send Paul Wellstone back to the faculty lounge?

JOHN J. MILLER

"TAXES were raised on just about everybody in order to get this country going again." That's Democratic senator Paul Wellstone explaining the causes of the late prosperity. Specifically, he says, it was his brave support of Bill Clinton's 1993 budget, which passed the Senate by a single vote. Enjoy those bygone days of wild-bull markets and near-full employment? Send a belated thank-you note to the tax-hiking senior senator from Minnesota.

Wellstone's strange remark came on October 15 at a debate in Moorhead, where he squared off against his Republican opponent, former St. Paul mayor Norm Coleman. Most people don't believe tax hikes pave the way for economic growth, of course, but Wellstone's claim could hardly qualify as a gaffe—he's been saying this sort of thing on the campaign trail all along, and he really means it. The question is whether voters will buy his logic: Wellstone is caught in one of this fall's tightest elections, and conservatives would love to see Coleman defeat him.

That's because the 58-year-old Wellstone is the most liberal member of the Senate—a title that has him beating out the likes of Hillary Clinton and Ted Kennedy. He inhabits a world in which health-care coverage is never complete enough, the minimum wage never high enough, "the rich" never taxed enough, and government never big enough.

At just under 5-and-a-half feet tall, Wellstone is a short man, but high on principle. Probably no other member of

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the Senate has been on the losing side of more 99–1 or 98–2 votes. None has voted more consistently against the Bush administration, according to *Congressional Quarterly*. Wellstone aspires to be a Barry Goldwater of the Left; the title of his recent book, *The Conscience of a Liberal*, is a deliberate echo of the conservative hero's own classic. He even has presidential ambitions—or at least he once did. Before the 2000 election, Wellstone was the clear favorite of his party's "progressive" wing—i.e., anti–New Democrats who swear by *The Nation*. Yet he bowed out, citing a bad back, and stumped for Bill Bradley. Al Gore was simply too mainstream.

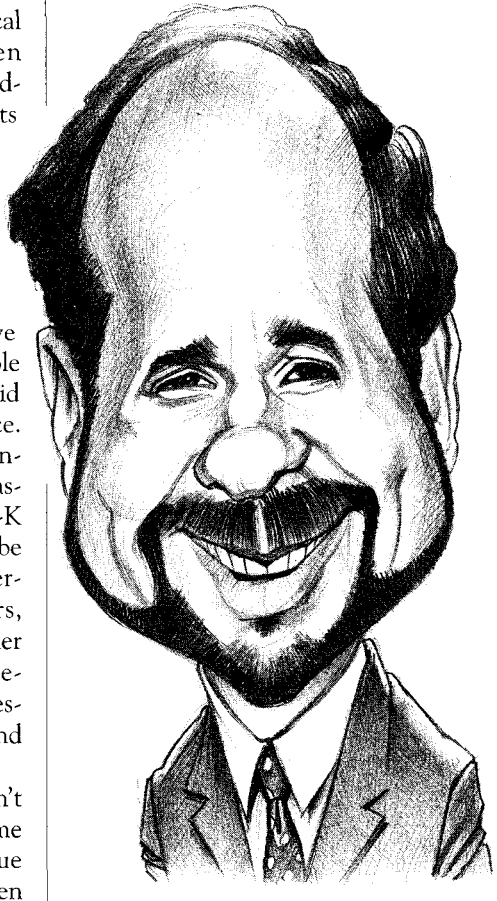
Paul Wellstone may sit at the far end of the political spectrum, yet it is difficult to dislike him on a personal level—even right-wingers must admit that he would probably make a good neighbor. Smiles and laughs come easily to him. His personal life, in fact, seems quite conservative: He married young, had a few kids, and remains married to his wife, after 39 years. He can be feisty, but he's rarely rude; there's still something of the college professor about him, acquired over the 21 years he spent teaching political science at Carleton College. When many Democrats talk about, say, extending unemployment benefits, their fists pound podiums, their ears billow smoke, and their faces turn red with rage. Not Wellstone. He speaks in measured tones, as if believing reasonable people will agree with him if they just listen long enough.

Which isn't to say he'd be persuasive if he could lecture on a topic for a whole semester. "All politics is personal," said Wellstone at a recent press conference. Indeed, he wants the government involved in *everything*. Consider this passage from his book, in a section on pre-K education: "Our national goal must be to ensure that every child, by kindergarten, knows the alphabet; colors, shapes, and sizes; how to spell his or her name; and has been read to widely. . . . This will require well-paid professional teachers, assisted by skillful and well-paid teaching assistants."

It will? Most moms and dads don't have such an excruciatingly hard time teaching their toddlers about big blue squares and little yellow circles. But then this proposal isn't really about what children must learn; it's about increasing the size and power of the National Education Association. Wellstone may be a man of principle, but his are the principles of labor unions, feminists, and greens.

Wellstone would still be hanging out in faculty lounges if he hadn't succeeded at his true calling—politics—in 1990. That year, he ran against the incumbent Republican senator, Rudy Boschwitz. At first, Wellstone seemed a sacrificial lamb, but he ran a scrappy and clever campaign, touring the state on a bus and spending his meager funds well. He won by a whisker in what must be considered one of the great Senate-election upsets of the last quarter century.

An important factor in Wellstone's surprise victory was his pledge to serve no more than two terms. Those were the days when term limits were trendy, and Wellstone's commitment almost certainly tipped a few crucial, late-deciding voters his way. It may even have made the difference in his race. By running for re-election this year, however, he formally breaks his word. He insists that keeping his promise of a dozen years ago is less important than keeping Tom Daschle as Senate majority leader.



Sen. Paul Wellstone by Ismael Roldan

Wellstone made an early mark in Washington. Shortly after his election, he said of his colleague Jesse Helms, "I have detested him since I was 19." At his initial meeting with the first President Bush, just before the Gulf War, he pestered the commander-in-chief with anti-war rhetoric—prompting Bush to ask, semi-famously, "Who is this chickensh**?" Not long after, Wellstone held a weepy press conference at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in an ill-advised attempt to turn a sobering national emblem into a crass political symbol. On the Hill, he was seen as undisciplined; he had trouble keeping staff.

These were rookie mistakes, however, and Wellstone has since corrected many of them. He remains an unreconstructed liberal, and the Left looks to him not just for steady support, but for actual leadership. One of his specialties is to channel federal dollars away from defense spending and toward assistance for veterans—a clever move that denies cash to the Pentagon but draws praise from flag-waving groups such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars, which endorsed Wellstone on October 7.

The GOP's Norm Coleman is an attractive alternative—and also the answer to a trivia question: Who would be governor of Minnesota today if it hadn't been for the freak appearance of Jesse Ventura? Four years ago, Coleman lost that race by a slim margin. He might have tried for the office again this year, but for the intervention of the White House. President Bush urged him to take on Wellstone, and the national party pulled strings to clear the primary field for him.

Coleman looks like the actor Willem Dafoe. His Brooklyn accent stands out against the Scandinavian inflections heard throughout the state. He's most at home in a business suit—"My agenda as mayor was the agenda of the Chamber of Commerce," he says—but he'll have to rack up healthy margins in the plaid-flannel reaches of rural Minnesota if he's to prevail.

Conservatives have viewed Coleman with some suspicion—six years ago, he actually endorsed Wellstone for re-election. He was still a Democrat then, albeit a right-leaning one who was grow-

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ing alienated from his party. The trouble began shortly after his first mayoral victory, in 1993, when he got snared in a bitter contract dispute with a municipal union. His support for a school-choice pilot project in St. Paul made waves as well, though the program never became a reality. He also refused to issue a gay-pride proclamation ("It's not the job of government") and found himself isolated because of his views on abortion ("Being pro-life in the Democratic party is akin to having leprosy").

The last straw was Wellstone's opposition to welfare reform. "It's what finally convinced me to switch parties," he says. Today, Coleman runs on a record that makes it sound as if he has been in the GOP from the beginning. He reminds audiences constantly about how he balanced budgets and didn't raise taxes for eight years as mayor. He's for military action against Iraq, the "personalization" of Social Security for young people (he rejects the term "privatization"), free trade with just about everybody (including Cuba), gun and gaming rights ("One of the biggest differences between me and my opponent is that I've got a fishing license"), snowmobiles in national parks (no small thing in a state that's frozen half the year), and making the Bush tax cuts permanent.

Coleman moderates a few positions, too. He says his favorite Supreme Court Justice is Sandra Day O'Connor. He's against oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. He would not have voted to remove Bill Clinton from office had he been a senator in 1999. Yet these seem like minor departures from a set of standard positions that would make him a reliable friend of conservatives in the Senate.

The race is tight, and the polls have shown some big swings: In September, a survey had Coleman leading Wellstone, 47 percent to 41 percent; in October, the same one had Wellstone ahead, 46 percent to 37 percent. It appears that Wellstone's vote against war authorization may have provided a boost. Whatever the reason, this year's most liberal member of the Senate and next year's most liberal member of the Senate will be the same person—unless Norm Coleman convinces Minnesota voters that it won't take a tax hike to get the country going again. **NR**

■ **CAMPAIGN '02** ■

How's the Granny Card Playing?

The evolving politics of Social Security

RAMESH PONNURU

THE charges and counter-charges being made about Social Security are getting awfully confusing. The Democrats say Republicans want to "privatize" the program, but the Republicans deny it. A few Republicans even say it's the Democrats who really support privatization. The only thing everyone seems to agree on is that "privatization" is a bad thing.

For the last five years, "privatization" has been debated in Washington. Supporters and opponents alike used the term to refer to plans that would allow people to invest some of their Social Security contributions for themselves. In 2000, George W. Bush became the first major-party nominee to support such a plan. He has not backed off from it as president. In January, a commission he appointed made the case for private investment accounts and outlined three reform options.

The anti-privatization rhetoric that pervades the current campaign may lead people to think that President Bush's idea is now dead. It's not. True, a few Republicans have disavowed private accounts. New Jersey Senate candidate Doug Forrester supported them in the primary, but has now flip-flopped. Four House candidates have come out against private accounts, too. Florida congressman John Mica signed a no-private-account pledge as part of his re-election campaign, but has since disavowed the disavowal (flop-flipped?).

But that's about it for defections. Most Republican politicians continue to support private accounts—all they've repudiated is the word "privatization." A late-August memo from the Republicans' House campaign committee explained: The P-word "elicits negative reactions among seniors because it carries connotations of dismantling the publicly run Social Security system." But those connotations are misleading. Even if Social Security were reformed to include private accounts, it would continue to be run by the federal government.

The memo made a strong case for ditching the word "privatization." It was dishonest, however, in pretending that the word was the invention of Democratic spinners: Republicans had used it too.

The word-change certainly has the Democrats hopping mad. They consider Social Security their strongest issue. They have won several midterm elections over the last generation by accusing Republicans of wanting to shred the program. Polls show that the public still trusts the Democrats more than the Republicans on Social Security. Democrats expected their advantage to grow in a year of corporate scandals and sliding stock prices. So sure were Democrats that the issue would help them that they even used it in the South Carolina governor's race, trashing Republican candidate Mark Sanford for supporting private accounts—despite the fact that governors can't do anything about Social Security.

■

All that Republican politicians have repudiated is the word 'privatization.'

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But bashing Republicans on Social Security hasn't worked as well for the Democrats as they had hoped. They have gotten bogged down in a debate over the meaning of "privatization." They're spending their time establishing the Republicans' position rather than criticizing it.

The word-change, in other words, has been successful. The pro-private-account, anti-"privatization" Republicans are doing just fine. Shelley Moore Capito, a West Virginia Republican congressman whom the Democrats have targeted for

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defeat, is now ahead of her opponent even though she's for private accounts. Adam Taff, who's for private accounts, is putting up a strong challenge to Kansas Democratic congressman Dennis Moore. John Kline, who's trying to unseat Minnesota Democrat Bill Luther, has signed a pledge to support private accounts. The three Senate candidates who have the greatest chance of unseating incumbent Democrats—Jim Talent in Missouri, Norm Coleman in Minnesota, and John Thune in South Dakota—all favor private accounts.

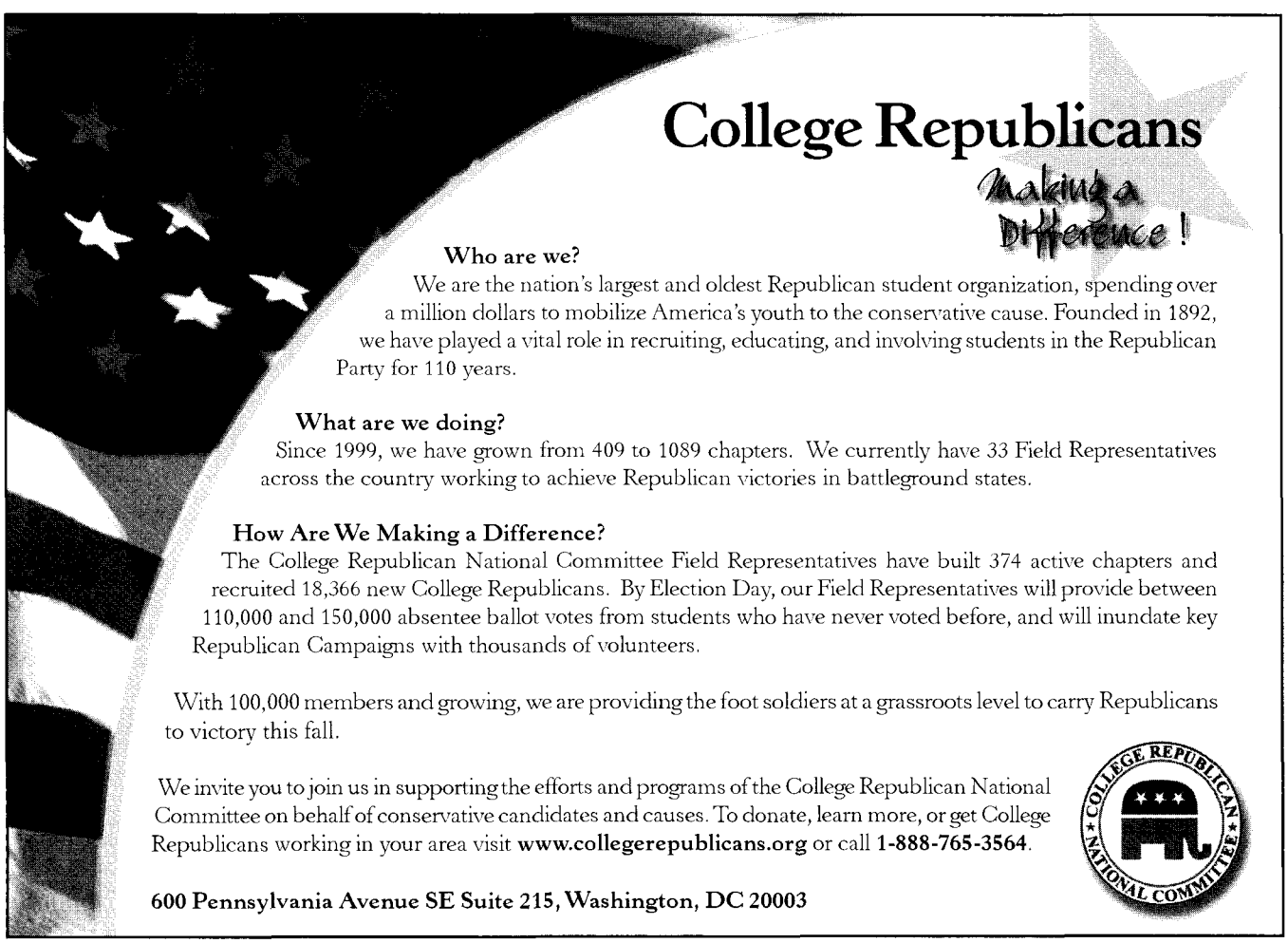
Some Republican candidates have even gone on offense on Social Security. Thune criticizes his Democratic opponent, Sen. Tim Johnson, for having supported government-directed investment of the Social Security trust fund when President Clinton floated the idea. (Thune says, confusingly, that this means that Johnson supported "privatization.") Elizabeth Dole, running for Senate in North Carolina, has taken to waving a blank sheet of paper that she says represents her opponent Erskine Bowles's plan to save Social Security. Kentucky Republican Anne Northup, an incumbent, is running ads highlighting her opponent's alternative to private accounts: benefit cuts. But probably the bravest of the reformers has been Republican congressman Pat Toomey. He is making the case for private accounts in a senior-heavy Pennsylvania district that barely reelected him in 2000.

The chief political danger of the Republican strategy is that it could make them look dishonest—as though they had malign intentions toward Social Security but were not owning up to the fact. In the New Hampshire Senate race, currently a nail-biter, Democrat Jeanne Shaheen is trying to make this charge stick to Republican John Sununu.

The Republicans look a bit weaselly because they have been a bit weaselly—and not just in abandoning "privatization." Sununu, for example, mailed voters a letter informing them that Social Security benefits had increased every year he was in Congress. That's true, but only because the program automatically increases benefits to adjust for the cost of living—not because of anything Sununu did.

Here and there, the press has legitimately zinged the Republicans for such tactics. It has not, of course, put a spotlight on the Democrats' dishonesties, which are legion. Shaheen has an ad claiming that private accounts would benefit only "John Sununu's Wall Street campaign contributors," who "stand to make millions if people have to put their Social Security in the stock market." In all of the leading private-account proposals, investment is voluntary and not restricted to stocks.

In several races, Democrats are claiming that Republican congressmen have voted for "privatization." But those congressmen weren't voting on any reform plan. The Democrats had proposed to prohibit any funding to implement the recommendations of President Bush's Social Security commission—before the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recommendations were even made. The Republicans voted no, as did 20 Democrats. That vote hardly constitutes an endorsement of privatization.

The Democrats have also touted a bogus study by two liberal academics, Peter Diamond and Peter Orszag, on the massive "benefit cuts" that private accounts would supposedly entail. The academics stacked the deck against private accounts. They didn't compare benefits under private accounts to the benefits that an unreformed Social Security can realistically be expected to pay. Instead, they compared the benefits from private accounts to the benefits that Social Security has merely promised but has no way of actually paying.

The Democrats did get some negative press when the party's website ran a cartoon showing President Bush pushing a wheelchair-bound senior citizen off a cliff (representing the sliding Dow). This was considered to be in poor taste. Nobody pointed out that the cartoon's message was also incontrovertibly untrue. The DNC argued that if President Bush's Social Security plan had been adopted when he proposed it, "the Social Security trust fund would have lost 40 percent of its value." Bush never proposed investing the Social Security trust fund in stocks, and his commission rejected the idea. He proposed letting young workers invest a portion of their Social Security taxes over the course of their working lives.

The only people who ever proposed investing the trust fund were Democrats. In the last years of the Clinton administration, Dick Gephardt, Tom Daschle, Jon Corzine, and Clinton himself suggested that the government invest the trust fund. If that had happened, the trust fund really would have declined. So if the Republicans are dissembling about what they said a few years ago, they aren't alone. But neither are they in an ideal position to make this point.

Many supporters of private accounts consider the Republican strategy too defensive. Where, they ask, is the evidence that reform is a political liability? Bush shrank the traditional Democratic advantage on entitlements by running on reform in 2000. In 2001, Republican Randy Forbes won a special House election in a difficult Virginia district following a Democratic campaign based on Social Security. And—even after a punishing stock market and corporate scandals—almost every poll shows majority support for private accounts.

The reformers' worry is not just that the Republicans are losing an opportunity to make private accounts a winning issue. They also know that most Republican senators aren't up for re-election, and that most Republican House members face only token opposition. What these congressmen know about the 2002 campaign is what they read, and if they get the false impression that Republican candidates have had to run away from private accounts to win they will be leery of supporting them.

The 2002 campaign has thus been a disheartening spectacle for reformers. But things could have been much worse. Private accounts were bound to face strong opposition this year. This is the first midterm election under a president who supports them. It's also the first midterm election in a protracted bear market since they became an issue. Under the circumstances, Republicans could easily have succumbed to the pressure to come out against private accounts. With very few exceptions, they haven't.

President Bush wants Congress to take up Social Security reform next year. Nothing that's happened in the campaign so far should dissuade him. **NR**

The Right Reaction
NATIONAL REVIEW

"I'm not a political conservative, but one of my favorite publications is William F. Buckley's NATIONAL REVIEW."

—Liz Smith, from her syndicated column

■ **CAMPAIGN '02** ■

The Zeal Against Jeb

For Florida Democrats, it's payback time

BERNADETTE MALONE

WATCHING President Bush's brother Jeb struggle to win re-election against a little-known trial lawyer, it's hard not to suspect that Democrats are trying extra-hard to exact revenge for Florida 2000—that the barrage of attacks against Jeb is payback for George W.'s victory.

Then again, maybe it's purely Jeb's fault that he's in a neck-and-neck race against Bill McBride (who came from behind to defeat Janet Reno by a hair in the Democratic primary). Maybe he's tied with his opponent in the polls for reasons other than a concerted effort to defeat him by embittered Democrats. The maybes continue to pile up: Maybe the governor is neglecting grassroots campaigning in favor of heavy media buys, in time-honored Bush fashion; maybe he's distracted, as any loving father would be, by the recent incarceration of his daughter for possession of narcotics; or maybe, as Republican state comptroller Bob Milligan says, Jeb "hasn't surrounded himself with the best people" in his campaign.

The governor certainly has made his share of mistakes this year. But suspicions that Democrats are thirsting for payback are rife. Public records from Leon County, Fla., suggest that just one week after Al Gore conceded the state's recount in December 2000, the teachers' union re-mortgaged its Tallahassee headquarters, freeing up $1.7 million to take down Jeb Bush—he would pay for

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the offense of George W.'s ascension to the presidency.

In December 2000, no one knew who would be the Democratic nominee to take on Jeb. It didn't matter. The Florida Education Association—like all the other left-leaning groups angry about *Bush* v. *Gore*—was committed to revenge for 2000 long before it knew what revenge's face would look like.

A year after it apparently increased the mortgage on its headquarters from $1 million to $2.7 million, the FEA identified that face, endorsing Bill McBride in January 2002 and pouring $1.5 million into television ads. When I asked FEA president Maureen Dinnen about the mortgage, she didn't deny it. "We were authorized to extend as many funds as needed because our people are so upset about the situation in Florida," she explained, citing a May 2001 delegate assembly that gave her "not exactly a blank check," but the authority to do whatever she could to beat Bush. Dinnen continued: "Whatever we did to secure those funds, I know it was legal and we have nothing to be ashamed of."

(After this story first circulated via National Review Online, Dinnen issued a statement saying, "We did not mortgage the building. I can categorically say there was no mortgage two years ago with the intent of squirreling away money.")

Whatever the source of the funds, the union is spending that $1.5 million. And the Democrats have been calling for Jeb Bush's head on a platter since December 2000. If they get it, they're going to deliver it to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue with a message: "You're next, George W."

It's not just the FEA. Democrats have brought out some of their heaviest hitters: Sens. Clinton, Lieberman, and Edwards are all making pit stops in Florida, and Al Gore is making fundraising calls on McBride's behalf. McBride has been feted by Bill Clinton and ex-senator Bob Kerrey at New York City fundraisers. And the Teamsters and the Sierra Club have both signed on to the anti-Jeb effort. This is no ordinary gubernatorial race in a non-presidential year.

And Jeb Bush, as Floridians know, is no ordinary governor. He is the first Republican governor in the state's history who has an excellent chance of winning re-election. Yet even in Florida, which is far more liberal than most other southern states, Bush hasn't had to move leftward very often in his party to maintain his popularity. "Rarely does one get a perfect choice in politics. But in this case, for me, Jeb Bush is nearly a perfect choice," beams Don Brown, a state legislator from Florida's conservative panhandle. "The governor is policy-oriented and very focused."

Ken Connor, a pro-life Tallahassee trial lawyer who ran against Jeb Bush in the 1994 gubernatorial primary and now heads the Family Research Council in Washington, D.C., is very pleased with the governor's performance. When asked about complaints from the right that Bush has played the preferences game in contracts and political appointments, Connor demurs: "I think Jeb has been pragmatic. It's appropriate that minorities and women be well repre-

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sented in government. He's astute; he sought to broaden his base."

According to polls, a majority of Hispanic Floridians support Bush over McBride. More surprisingly, women are divided equally between the two—a remarkable triumph over the "gender gap" for a pro-life conservative Republican. Winning a respectable minority of black Floridians, however, will be a challenge for Jeb. His controversial "One Florida" program—which began to dismantle the state's affirmative-action program—was a key agenda item some conservatives privately wish he had soft-pedaled. Compounded by charges from blacks of discrimination at Florida's polling places in the 2000 election, One Florida may cause blacks to turn out big for McBride (though they supported Reno in the primary).

The gay lobby—thrilled by McBride's recent expression of support for homosexual adoption—has also been galvanized, by a Bush gaffe in early October. Not realizing a Pensacola reporter was standing among a group of his conservative supporters, Bush claimed to have "juicy details" about the relationship between the two female caregivers of missing Miami girl Rilya Wilson. The women say they are half-sisters, but Bush implied that they are actually something else. "Bet you don't get a lot of that in Pensacola," he cracked to the crowd.

During the same conversation, Bush joked that he had a "devious plan" to undermine the constitutional amendment dramatically limiting public-school class sizes—a policy prescription with unproven effects on student performance, but proven benefits for teachers' unions always looking to create more slots for new dues-paying members. Naturally, Bush's "devious" comment is being spun by Democrats to insinuate that he cares little about education—a grievous misrepresentation of a governor who has long been passionate about teacher accountability and school-choice programs.

If Bush can beat back the onslaught against him, he will indeed be the first Republican governor ever elected for a second term in the state. If he comes up a little short? This is a Florida election: There'll be a recount. **NR**

■ **PUBLIC POLICY** ■

Bullets and Bunkum

The futility of 'ballistic fingerprinting'

JOHN R. LOTT JR.

In the wake of the Washington, D.C., sniper attacks, many are viewing ballistic fingerprinting as a magic crime-solving tool. According to the pro-gun-control Brady Campaign, such a system "would have solved [the sniper case] after the first shooting"; a *Washington Post* columnist calls it a "common-sense measure"; and many politicians are jumping on board, including New York Democratic senator Charles Schumer and Maryland Democratic gubernatorial nominee Kathleen Kennedy Townsend. Unfortunately, the issue is not so simple: By draining resources away from other police activities and making it costly for law-abiding citizens to own guns, ballistic fingerprinting could end up actually *increasing* crime.

The physics of ballistic fingerprinting are straightforward. When a bullet travels through the barrel of a gun, the friction creates markings on the bullet. If the gun is new, imperfections in the way the barrel is drilled can produce different markings on the bullet; such imperfections are most noticeable in inexpensive guns. (This poses an irony for gun controllers, who push for laws that ban inexpensive guns.) In older guns, the bullets' friction through the barrel can cause more noticeable wear marks that help differentiate between guns. Many other factors influence the particular markings left on the bullets—for instance, how often the gun is cleaned and what brand of cartridge is used.

Precisely because friction causes wear, a gun's ballistic fingerprint changes over time—making it drastically different from such forensic evidence as human fingerprints or DNA. The recording of a child's fingerprints or DNA still allows for identification much later in life; the same is not true of the bullet markings. A ballistic fingerprint is less like a human fingerprint than it is like the tread on a car tire.

Brand-new tires are essentially identical, so new-tire tracks at crime scenes leave investigators with pretty limited information. Unless there happens to be a particular imperfection, only the brand and model of the tire can be identified. Imprints on bullets are similar. When a bullet is fired from a new gun, investigators can typically identify only the type of ammunition and the type of gun. Over time, though, friction causes the tread on tires to wear. It would be easy to take the tire tracks left at a crime scene and match them with a suspected criminal's car; but the more the car is driven after the crime, the harder it is to match the tire tracks left at the scene to the tires when they are eventually found. Similarly, the greatest friction on a gun occurs when the gun is first fired—and that dramatically reduces the usefulness of recording the gun's ballistic fingerprint when it is purchased.

Moreover, ballistic fingerprinting can be thwarted by replacing the gun's barrel—just as criminals can foil tire-matching by simply replacing their tires. In general, the markings on bullets can be altered even more quickly and easily than the tread marks on tires: Scratching part of the inside of a barrel with a nail file would alter the bullet's path down the barrel and thus change the markings. So would putting toothpaste on a bullet before firing it.

Ballistic fingerprinting faces other difficulties. For example, even if the gun was not used much between the time the ballistic fingerprint was originally recorded and the time the crime occurred, police still have to be able to trace the gun from the original owner to the criminal—but only 12 percent of guns used in crime are obtained by the criminal through retail stores or pawn shops. The rest are virtually impossible to trace.

So far only Maryland and New York

Mr. Lott, a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, is the author of *More Guns, Less Crime*.

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have started recording the ballistic fingerprints of all new handguns sold. While Maryland's program technically started in January 2001, the cost of implementing the program made it unprofitable for gun makers to sell handguns in the state for the first six months of that year. The state government faced a $1.1 million start-up cost and another $750,000-a-year operating cost. New York's program began in March 2001, with a state start-up expenditure of about $4.5 million. (No estimates are available yet on New York's annual cost.)

In both states, the costs for dealers, gun makers, and prospective gun owners were responsible for reducing handgun sales to law-abiding citizens. And what was the specific benefit? Almost zero. The programs have not helped solve a single violent crime in either state; they have so far been used only to identify two handguns stolen from a Maryland gun shop.

A recent study by the State of California points to further practical difficulties with ballistic fingerprinting. The study tested 790 pistols firing a total of 2,000 rounds. When the cartridges used with a particular gun came from the same manufacturer, computer matching failed 38 percent of the time. When the cartridges came from different manufacturers, the failure rate rose to 62 percent. And this study does not even begin to address problems caused by wear, so the real-world failure rate can be expected to be much higher. The California report warned that "firearms that generate markings on cartridge casings can change with use and can also be readily altered by the users." Further, it warned that the problems of matching would soar dramatically if more guns were included in the sample. The study's verdict: "Computer-matching systems do not provide conclusive results . . . potential candidates [for a match must] be manually reviewed."

While registering guns by their ballistic fingerprints is a relatively new concept, we have had plenty of experience using gun registration in general, and it has come up woefully short. A couple of years ago, I testified before the Hawaii state legislature on a bill to change registration requirements. Hawaii has had both registration and licensing of guns for several decades.

In theory, if a gun is left at the crime scene, licensing and registration will allow the gun to be traced back to its owner. Police have probably spent hundreds of thousands of man-hours administering these laws in Hawaii. But despite this massive effort, there has not been a single case in which police claimed that licensing and registration have been instrumental in identifying a criminal.

The reason is simple. First, criminals very rarely leave their guns at a crime scene, and when they do, it is because the criminals have been killed or seriously wounded. Second—and more important for ballistic fingerprinting—would-be criminals also virtually never get licenses or register their weapons. The guns that are recovered at the scene are not registered.

Good intentions don't necessarily make good laws. What counts is whether the laws actually work, and end up saving lives. On that measure, ballistic fingerprinting—a useless diversion of valuable police resources—fails conspicuously, and it should be opposed by anyone who wants to live in a safer society. **NR**

WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT

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■ AFRICA ■

Carter in Ethiopia

Revisiting one of the Nobelist's missed chances

ROBERT D. KAPLAN

THE award of the Nobel peace prize to former president Jimmy Carter is a manifestation of selective memory. What follows is a story about how the precepts of the Carter administration's human-rights policy—and that president's aversion to the use of force in the defense of moral principles—became an impediment to possibly saving 30 million Ethiopians from the undertow of totalitarianism.

The story begins during the Nixon and Ford administrations, when the murderous Ethiopian *Dergue* ("Committee") and its merciless leader, Mengistu Haile Mariam, rose to power concomitant with the domestic distraction of Watergate and the fall of South Vietnam. The *Dergue* began executing its own followers and threatened to do the same to more members of the Ethiopian royal family. Since Mengistu's ruthless and dynamic regime seemed unlikely to fall, the outgoing U.S. secretary of state, Henry Kissinger, trying to keep an iron in the fire, continued some of the military assistance that had been going to Addis Ababa. If the United States were to give up all its leverage in Ethiopia, the country would simply take the next step and become a Soviet satellite, with vast and unpleasant consequences for its entire population.

President Ford and Kissinger were replaced in January 1977 by Jimmy Carter and his new secretary of state, Cyrus Vance, with Andrew Young as U.N.

Mr. Kaplan, a correspondent of *The Atlantic Monthly*, is the author of many books, including *Surrender or Starve: The Wars Behind the Famine*, about the Horn of Africa.

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Think of it as a Mute button for the world around you. Whether you're irritated by the engine roar on airplanes, noise of the city, bustle in the office or the blare of neighborhood yard work, this headset lets you hush them all. And it does it with the flick of a switch. You savor delicate musical nuances in places where you couldn't before. And when you're not listening to music, you can use it to quietly enjoy a little peace. Clearly, the Bose QuietComfort headset is no ordinary headset. It's no exaggeration to say it's one of those things you have to experience to believe.

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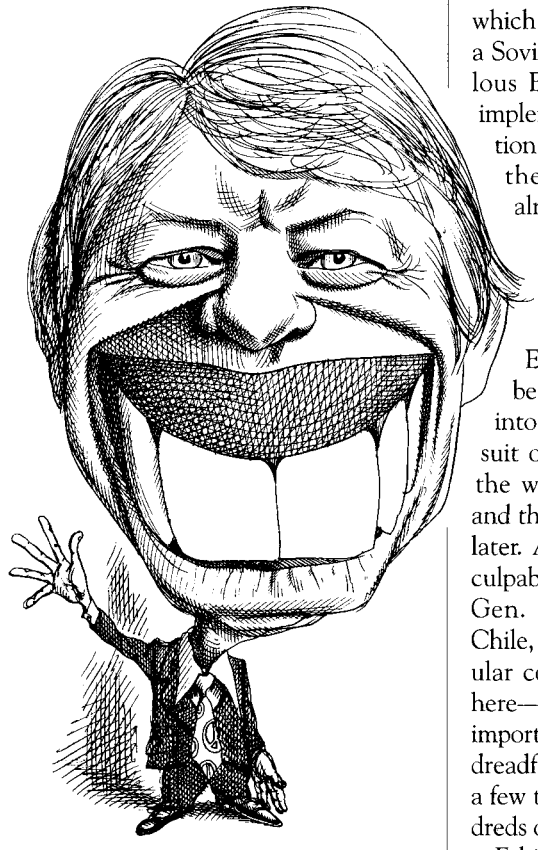
ambassador adopting a high profile on African affairs. They wanted a policy that demonstrated more concern for sub-Saharan Africa but with less heavy-handedness. In the Horn of Africa, that translated immediately into asymmetry because the Soviets were becoming more enterprising and brazenly aggressive than ever.

With Ethiopia riven by revolutionary turmoil, the Soviets helped their irredentist Somalian clients to plan an invasion of Ethiopia's Ogaden Desert; the aim was to use Somalia to pressure Ethiopia into the Soviet orbit, and then to call off the Somalian invasion. Somalia was at the time a country of only 3 million nomads, whereas Ethiopia had a more urbanized population ten times the size—excellent fodder for the mechanized African satellite that gradually became Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev's supreme objective. The Soviets, while threatening Ethiopia with a Somalian invasion, were also offering it military aid—the classic carrot-and-stick strategy. Yet, thanks partly to the M-60 tanks and F-5 warplanes that Mengistu had been receiving from the United States as the Ford administration was leaving office—as well as American spare parts coming to him courtesy of Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin—the Ethiopian leader was hesitant to go through the disruptive task of switching armorers for an entire army.

In the spring of 1977, despite the military threat from Somalia, Carter cut off all arms deliveries to Ethiopia because of its awful human-rights record. The Soviets next dispatched East German security police and Cuban advisers to Addis Ababa to help Mengistu consolidate his regime, and invited the Ethiopian ruler to Moscow for a week-long state visit. In the coming months, with the help of the East Germans, the *Dergue* would gun down hundreds of Ethiopian teenagers in the streets in a process that came to be known as the "Red Terror."

There was still some hope, though. The Ethiopian revolution, leftist as it was, and despite Mengistu's diatribes, showed relatively few other signs of overt anti-Americanism, nor were there any foreign hostages, as would be the case in Iran. Israel's new prime minister, Menachem Begin, in an attempt to save Ethiopian Jews, pleaded with Carter not to close the door completely on Ethiopia, but to give Mengistu some military assistance against the Somalian advance: for the Soviets, having unleashed the Somalians, were failing to engineer the cease-fire between the two countries that became part of their overall game plan.

Carter refused to resume the arms relationship with Mengistu, which was somewhat understandable given Ethiopia's tilt toward Moscow. Still, in principle at least, he was very interested in helping the Somalians, whose hell-bent irredentism was providing Washington with a fresh and different kind of opportunity to muddle the outcome in Ethiopia. National security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, to his credit, wanted to give the Somalians arms, deploy the U.S. Navy in the region, and link Soviet behavior in the Horn to progress on nuclear-arms talks. But in the end Vance's State Department won this particular policy battle, proclaiming that as long as Somalia was illegally occupying territory in another country, it could not be helped. As for Ethiopia, State offered it a negotiated settlement, but with no carrot or stick held in the background. The Soviets were less aloof and legalistic: They simply gave Mengistu the military aid the Americans wouldn't, and Ethiopia began to turn the tide of the Somalian invasion. It was an early example of a presidency with a self-canceling foreign policy, the result of which was less appeasement than ineffectuality.



Jimmy Carter by Roman Genn

Even if Ford had been elected in 1976, it is doubtful whether his instincts and those of Kissinger would have been enough to save Ethiopia. What's clear, though, is that the Carter administration played its hand terribly by relying on statements rather than force or genuine pressure. The upshot was that Ethiopia went from being yet another nasty, left-leaning regime to a full-fledged Marxist state, in which hundreds of thousands of people were to die in crackpot collectivization and "villagization" schemes, to say nothing of the million or so people who would die in famines that were as much a consequence of made-in-Moscow agriculture policies as they were of drought. I interviewed survivors of collectivization and villagization in refugee camps in Somalia in the mid 1980s: Their stories evoked the horror of Stalin's Ukrainian deportations of the 1930s, with the ensuing "terror famine."

Vance and Young had wanted an African solution to an African problem, which in the context of the times meant a Soviet solution. For in poor and populous Ethiopia the Communists could implement policies that, with the exception of Nicolae Ceausescu's Romania, they no longer dared to try in an already-restive Soviet bloc.

The linkage between Carter's heartfelt but ineffectual foreign policy in the Horn of Africa and the mass deaths that followed in Ethiopia is more direct than that between President Nixon's incursion into a rural area of Cambodia—in pursuit of enemy sanctuaries to help ease the withdrawal of American troops—and the Khmer Rouge takeover six years later. As for the Nixon administration's culpability in the 1973 coup that brought Gen. Augusto Pinochet to power in Chile, an issue that has become a particular concern of the international Left, here—without meaning to disregard the importance of even one human life—the dreadful fact is that we are talking about a few thousand deaths, rather than hundreds of thousands.

Ethiopia may well have been beyond

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saving, whereas the Nixon administration actively supported the Chilean coup. But we should also not forget that this same Chilean military regime, in the first seven years of its rule—while the rest of Latin America was dithering in socialist experiments—privatized all but 25 of 500 state companies: an action that would lead to the creation of over a million jobs and the reduction of the poverty rate from a third of the population to a tenth, while also lowering infant mortality from 79 per 1,000 births to 11 per 1,000. The Ethiopians should have been so lucky as to have a Pinochet.

Had Carter promptly armed the Somalians, he might have moderated the behavior of both Mengistu and the Soviets in the Horn. His decision not to do so made for a policy that was more sanctimonious than virtuous. Now that he has won the Nobel peace prize, Carter will likely step up his criticism of using force against Iraq. But as the example of Ethiopia shows, when it comes to dealing with brutal regimes, his instincts are not to be trusted. **NR**

■ **INTERNATIONAL LAW** ■

Court Dismissed

The ICC is a snare and a monstrosity—with no standing

LEE A. CASEY &
DAVID B. RIVKIN JR.

"THEY have learned nothing," remarked a disgusted Talleyrand when the Bourbons returned to France, "and they have forgotten nothing." His words might be applied with equal justice to Europe's current governing class. Indeed, today's Eurobureaucrats have pretensions that dwarf those of the Bourbons: European Commission president Romano Prodi declares that the new Europe's goal is the creation of a new "superstate" to rival the United States.

Of course, vast conscript armies and fleets of dreadnoughts are no longer the tools of European imperialism. Today's Europeans are actually quite unwilling to use military power and are often hostile when—as in Iraq—the U.S. chooses to project force around the world. Europe's mantra is adherence to the letter of international law and to the prerogatives of international institutions—most notably, the new international criminal court (ICC) established under the 1998 Rome Statute. The ICC claims jurisdiction over a dizzying array of ill-defined offenses, from genocide to "severe damage to the natural environment." It also asserts authority over every man and

Messrs. Casey & Rivkin are partners in the Washington, D.C., office of Baker & Hostetler LLP. Both served in the Reagan and George H. W. Bush administrations.

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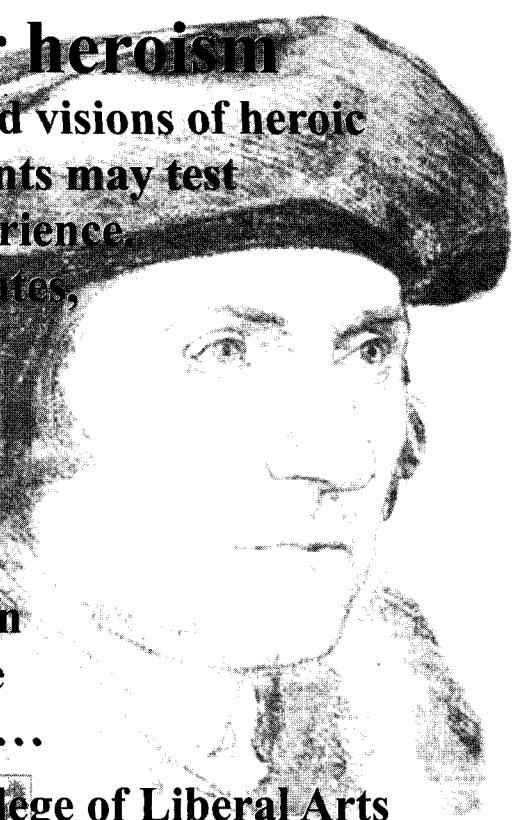
makes available models and visions of heroic action against which students may test their own actions and experience. As Jacques Maritain indicates, poetry "is the secret life of each and all the arts": all the disciplines are in some sense translations of a common *poetic* insight, an intuitive source too often ignored or forgotten by the rationalistic, secular mind . . .



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woman on earth, regardless of whether their own countries have chosen to ratify the Rome Statute. The 15 member states of the European Union have accurately been described as the "backbone" of this court, and they are the largest single voting bloc in the ICC's governing body. Indeed, there is little doubt that, from the outset, Europe has assumed that its nationals, as prosecutors and judges, will control the court.

The U.S. itself has rejected the Rome Statute, making clear that it considers the treaty to be hopelessly flawed, an open invitation to abuse by ambitious and/or biased prosecutors and judges. It also has made clear that it will defend its citizens from the ICC's power—by force, if necessary. In response, Europe has undertaken a concerted campaign to ensure that the ICC *will* exercise its power over Americans. That, it now appears, was the project's purpose from the start: to discipline the American "hyperpower" (the phrase former French foreign minister Hubert Védrine used to describe the nation-state that drove Hitler's legions from Paris).

The depth of Europe's commitment to imposing this court on the U.S. is most evident in the EU's efforts to prevent its members, and especially vulnerable potential members, from entering agreements with the U.S. that would forbid the extradition of Americans to the ICC. Romania, which entered such an agreement, has "compromised" its chances of EU membership, and the European Commission's legal staff flatly considers such agreements unacceptable, even though they are specifically contemplated in Article 98 of the Rome Statute itself. The EU position is made especially hypocritical by the fact that the French exempted themselves for seven years from most of the ICC's jurisdiction. Moreover, after extolling for years the notion that the U.N. Security Council has plenary powers that can override virtually any legal arrangement, Europe cried foul when the U.S. tried to get the Security Council to immunize U.N. peacekeepers from ICC jurisdiction. One of the Europeans' key concerns was that the Security Council not be allowed to revise the provisions of the Rome Statute.

This is part and parcel of a determined effort to subject the American people to the ICC with or without their consent. In the process, Europe's leaders are trampling the core norms of the very same international law they profess to venerate: Any effort to subject a sovereign state to a treaty regime that it has emphatically rejected is without precedent in modern international law, and amounts to gunboat diplomacy by judicial fiat.

■

Europe's leaders are trampling the core norms of the very same international law they profess to venerate.

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Back in 1998, when there was still a chance of coaxing the U.S. into the ICC regime, European diplomats took every opportunity to reassure Americans that the ICC was designed not to trouble the U.S., but purely to prosecute and punish such international rogues as Saddam Hussein. Five years later, with the U.S. firmly outside of the ICC club, the same crowd is feigning outrage at the Bush administration's modest efforts to protect Americans from the court's reach, and even claiming that the U.S. is seeking "immunity" from international law.

That last claim, not to put too fine a point on it, is a lie—and they know it. The U.S. remains bound by every aspect of international law to which it was bound before rejecting the Rome Statute. It has not sought "immunity" for its troops from international law. The U.S. respects and enforces all of the requirements of international law, and has merely chosen not to subject itself to a novel international enforcement mechanism, an institution with no track record and no effective checks upon the use, or abuse, of its power.

In fact, it is the U.S. itself that is seeking to uphold the settled international-law rights of all states that have chosen not to join the ICC system—states that still represent the vast majority of the world's population. The most fundamental aspect of the international system—dating to the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia (which ended Europe's religious wars), and explicitly reflected in the U.N. Charter—is the absolute legal equality of states. No state, or group of states, can adopt a treaty and then impose that document on other states that do not consent.

To support the ICC's assertion of jurisdiction over the nationals of non-state parties, proponents invariably point to the international-law doctrine of "universal jurisdiction," and claim that the offenses included within the ICC's jurisdiction are all already "universal" crimes anyway. But this, too, is incorrect. The ICC statute contains dozens of "crimes," some of which may be subject to universal jurisdiction, but many of which merely aspire to that status—such as the crime of "committing outrages upon personal dignity." There simply is insufficient international practice (the key aspect of determining what international law provides) to support "universal" status for all of the offenses outlined in the Rome Statute.

Even if all aspects of the Rome Statute were subject to universal jurisdiction, however, this still would not support the extravagant claims made by and for the ICC. The doctrine of universal jurisdiction merely provides that, with respect to some crimes, such as piracy and the transatlantic slave trade, all states have the right to criminalize the conduct. The second question, of who can try and punish offenders, is far more complex, and there is no clear answer when the conduct has taken place not on the high seas, beyond the boundaries of any state, but within a state's territory.

ICC supporters also opine that "territorial jurisdiction"—the right of states to prosecute foreigners who violate international law on their territory—creates a precedent for their claim of authority over American and other non-party nationals. But territorial jurisdiction cannot be transferred; there is no international precedent that would support the wholesale transfer of the territory-based prosecutorial power to a supranational institution. The only existing precedents for supranational criminal prosecution are the existing ad hoc tribunals for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia—whose jurisdiction is derived from a U.N. Security Council

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resolution, issued pursuant to Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter. All U.N. members agree to implement such resolutions when they join the organization.

The ICC's proponents, however long they may rummage in history's closet, will not find an instance of similar jurisdiction being claimed against independent states. The Nuremberg Tribunal, which punished the surviving top Nazis after World War II, did not exercise such a jurisdiction. That tribunal itself made clear that its legal right to prosecute and try Hitler's henchmen was grounded in the "undoubted right of [the Allies] to legislate for" a defeated Germany. Even under the 19th-century practice of "capitulations," in which judicial power over foreigners was vested by the declining Ottoman and Chinese empires in Western diplomats, judicial power could not be exercised over the nationals of an objecting state. The ICC is truly a revolutionary institution, and in opposing it, the United States is doing a great service to the cause of international law. **NR**

■ **CULTURE WATCH** ■

'Gutter' Politics

Playing the name game

JAY NORDLINGER

I'm not going to say "gutter." That's what they want us to say now, instead of Qatar (and you know who I mean by "they"). From time immemorial—defined as the duration of my life—we've said "Qa-TAHR." Every red-blooded American says "Qa-TAHR." But the other day, I even heard Condi Rice—the otherwise unimpeachable Condi Rice—say "gutter." I nearly busted a gut.

I'm not going to say "cobble" either. That's the new Kabul, as you know—the new "Ka-BUHL." In the highest administration councils, there was a contretemps—a reported contretemps, I should say—on this very subject. Donald Rumsfeld complained, "I think the top diplomat of this country ought to know how to pronounce the name of the Afghan capital." He was talking about Colin Powell. Rumsfeld, apparently, is a "cobble" man, and Powell is a "Ka-BUHL" man. Powell responded—again, reportedly—"Well, where I come from, it's Ka-BUHL."

I'm a shameless Rummy booster, but I'm strongly with Powell on this one.

If you start to go native on the pronunciation of foreign capitals and other places, there's no end to it. None. I called up the Qatari embassy in Washington. The receptionist answered, "Good morning, Embassy of Qa-TAHR." I smiled. I then asked—this was a native—how Qataris ("gutterees"?) pronounced it. She said "gutter," or something close. But one gets

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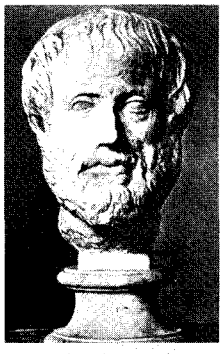

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the feeling that she wouldn't say "gutter" when speaking in English. Neither would an American say "United States" instead of "Etats-Unis" when speaking French.

And then there's the matter of the sheer ugliness—aural ugliness—of both "gutter" and "cobble." (Is that ethnocentric—sound-o-centric?) When I discussed this issue on the web, a reader wrote in, "Afghanistan's capital city certainly appears to be a hellhole, but at least the name Kabul—Ka-BUHL—lent it a certain Eastern allure. 'Cobble,' on the other hand, fails entirely to inspire the right vision. Where's the romance in 'cobble'? And 'gutter'! Ugh!"

Yes, ugh. For a while—when the bombs started falling over there—some news dorks were saying "Afghanis" instead of the proper "Afghans," in an effort, it seems, to sound in-the-know. Fortunately, they have stopped now, for the most part.

But the general problem persists. Last winter, I was thinking of starting a "Torino Watch." Why? Katie Couric was broadcasting from the Salt Lake City Olympics, and she was looking forward to the next Winter Olympics, to be held in . . . "Torino," she said. Why she said "Torino," instead of good ol' Turin, is shrouded in mystery. Would-be sophisticates are always saying "Torino" instead of Turin and "Milano" instead of Milan. But, oddly, they don't say Roma—except "when in Rome," presumably—and they don't say "Venezia" (Venice), "Firenze" (Florence), or "Napoli" (Naples).

Even I, though, draw the line at "Leghorn": I say Livorno. But this puts me at odds with Winston Churchill, who wrote to his foreign secretary in 1941, "If you approve I should like Livorno to be called in the English—Leghorn." Though "if at any time you are conversing agreeably with Mussolini in Italian, Livorno would be correct." This is the same Churchill who would write, four years later, "I do not consider that names that have been familiar for generations in England should be altered to study the whims of foreigners living in those parts." Without a firm stand, "the B.B.C. will be pronouncing Paris 'Paree.' Foreign names were made for Englishmen, not Englishmen for foreign names."

Harrumph. But there is a point—or several—and one of them is consistency. Katie Couric may swing with "Torino," but she'd never say "Köln" instead of Cologne, and she probably wouldn't refer back to the (horrendous) "München" Olympics. Nor would she pretend that the 2004 Summer Games will be held in "Athena."

In some cases, you just can't take the politics out of the pronunciation. You recall the great controversy over "Nicaragua," in the 1980s: When Peter Jennings rolled that "r," you just knew he hated the Contras. Same with the broadcasters of NPR (nicknamed by right-wingers and other realists "Radio Managua"). Charles Krauthammer wrote a semi-famous column on this topic, admonishing, "Give foreign words their most mundane English rendering": no umlauts or other curlicues.

■

In some cases, you just can't take the politics out of the pronunciation.

■

And yet the sandal-friendly Left just can't give up their Spanish (or faux-Spanish) pronunciations, thinking it makes them extra-cool and sympathetic. One Hispanic gentleman wrote me, "I've even heard 'Cooba' when a liberal really wants to feel my pain." Another man wrote of a college friend whose parents are Spanish, though she herself grew up in Virginia. "Freshman year, she always said 'Barcelona,' normally. Over the summer, she must have discovered her 'roots,' because by sophomore year she was dressing in all black and saying 'Bar-thay-lona.'" Sure.

And I especially liked this: "I am a student in southern California, and am constantly angered by the insistence of so many that one use a Spanish accent when pronouncing Spanish names. I have on occasion asked professors who do this to pronounce my last name with a southern drawl (as I'm from the South). And I once asked a fellow student to pronounce my last name without an American accent, 'as it was intended to be pronounced back in England.'" This sort of cheek is good for the soul.

And do you ever say Peking? Only when ordering duck, huh? There's something vaguely right-wing about saying Peking instead of Beijing, isn't there? I always feel a little *frisson* of rebellion when I do so. If you wanted to be a real weirdo, you could say Peiping.

I heard from a man who said, "I have six (mostly grown) children, and I've done my best with them, but I can't fight the tyranny of PC pronunciation. Of particular annoyance is 'Beijing' for 'Peking,' which I believe to be a perfectly acceptable anglicization. Of course, my daughter named my granddaughter 'Sionnain' (read: 'Shannon')." You could hear his sighs over the Internet.

I know puffed-up people who say "Côte d'Ivoire" (which they always pronounce in poor French) instead of "Ivory Coast." What's wrong with "Ivory Coast," if you got it? Besides which, are we to use the language of the colonizing oppressor? Surely there must be a suitable African name, maybe even with a click or two.

I suppose that countries—like people—should be called what they want to be called, but I have a hard time swallowing "Myanmar" instead of Burma, and I'm very cross about "Burkina Faso" instead of the Upper Volta. I'm especially attached to the Upper Volta, because its capital has the best name of any capital: Ouagadougou. Luckily, they have not yet changed that. India—or someone—changed Bombay to "Mumbai," but I'm happy to report that that's not yet catching on. Or is it? (Churchill wrote—back in 1945—"Bad luck always pursues peoples who change the names of their cities.")

When it comes to the pronunciation of things foreign, my view is, "In for a penny, in for a pound." (Is that too English—I mean, British?) If you're going to go part of the way, you should really go all of the way. I had a Dutch friend in college who was amused at his art-history teacher. The teacher tried to be all fancy, saying "Gogh" the Dutch way—with all that throat-scraping—instead of good ol' "go." But he left the "van" as it was, in English: like the vehicle you tote the family around in. That

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made his attempt at authenticity laughable, or at least incomplete.

We have our pretenders in music, too. For example, there's a perfectly acceptable English way of saying Debussy—"DEB-you-see." But when striving Americans try to say it the French way, they screw it all up, *never* getting the "u" correct, and usually—wrongly—accenting the second syllable. Also, you may enjoy knowing that the Wagner Society in New York City is run by a couple named: Wagner (pronounced as in Mayor Robert Wagner, not as in Richard—and the composer's first name, in turn, is *not* pronounced as in "Little").

One law I stick to is that everyone has the right to have his name—his personal name—pronounced however he wants. No ifs, ands, or buts. Midway through his career, Tony Dorsett switched his name from "DOR-sit" to "Dor-SETT." According to the newspapers, his mother wasn't too thrilled about this. I once knew a guy who refused to pronounce Leonard Bernstein's name the way the conductor liked it: "Bernstine," to rhyme with "vine." (Lenny used to say, "You wouldn't say 'Gertrude Steen,' would you?") The guy I knew thought he was putting Bernstein down when he said "steen," or not letting the old performer get away with anything.

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Do you know Ira Gershwin's favorite joke? A Mrs. Levine walks in to audition, and . . .

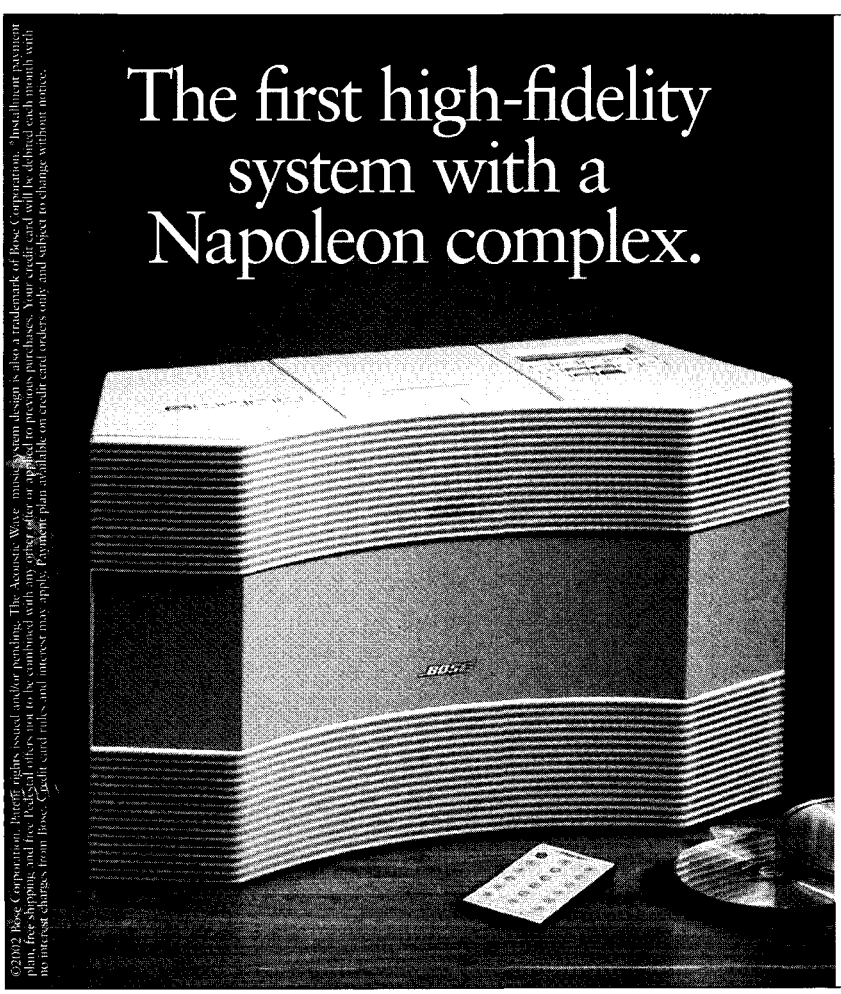
■

And do you know Ira Gershwin's favorite joke? A woman—Mrs. Levine—walks in to audition for Ira himself. She starts to sing, "You say eether and I say eyether, / You say neether and I say nyther . . . ," and Gershwin breaks in, saying, "Thank you, Mrs. Leveen." The woman, hands on hips, huffs, "It's Le-vine!"

My model in these matters—as in others—is the late general, diplomat, and linguist Vernon Walters. He spoke nine languages, and was renowned for his mastery. He anglicized absolutely everything. When referring to the head German SOB in World War I, for instance, he'd say "William the Second." And if it was good enough for Walters . . .

I'll leave you with one more foreign capital. The story's complicated, but Bangkok, to Thais, is not merely "Bangkok." In fact, it's not "Bangkok" at all. The capital has a long, long formal name, and, to make matters even more interesting, the Thai language acknowledges no spaces between words (within a sentence or concept). So, I give you "Krungthepmahanakhonamonratratanakosinmahintharaayuthayamahadilokphopnoppharatratchathaniburiromudomratchaniwetmahasathanamonpimanawatansathitsakkathattiyawitsanukamprasit."

Wrap your tongue around that, Katie. (You too, Condi.) **NR**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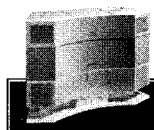

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■ EUROPE ■

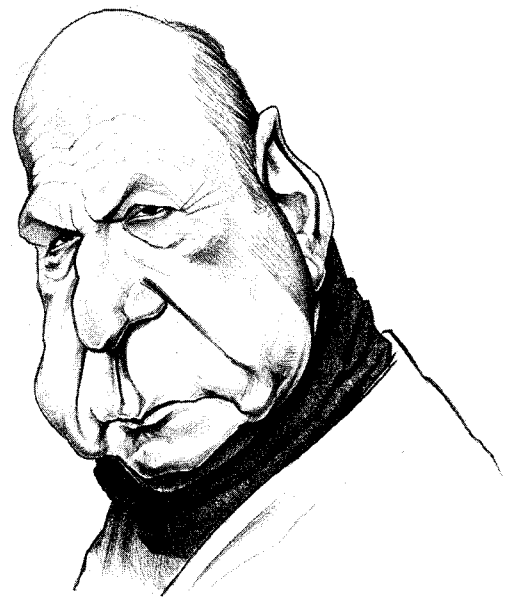
The Latest Paris Fashion . . .

. . . and also an old one: Anti-Americanism in the land of Tocqueville

DAVID PRYCE-JONES

FRANCE and Germany are in poor shape. No idea how to deal with recession and high unemployment; unable to resort—without violating EU rules—to the old trick of budget deficits to buy time; caught between mass immigration, fear of terrorism, and the backlash of racism (as evinced in France by the surge of the National Front). In these circumstances, anti-Americanism is a relief, a distraction, and—finally—a source of much-needed unity.

Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder has committed Germany to have nothing to do with what he calls the American "adventure" in Iraq. The country's intellectual elite may appreciate that freedom and democracy arrived with the American army in 1945, but the population at large has the sense that American victory rearranged the good old order, on the one hand draining away the essential Germanness of that order, and on the other hand conscripting Germans into far too much adventure. Cruise missiles antagonized the Soviet Union, many have come to conclude, whereas appeasement and trade brought it down. Better, safer, to pretend with Schroeder that a dictator like Saddam Hussein is really a partner like anybody else.



Jean-François Revel by Ismael Roldan

Something like 200 German firms, large and small, have contributed in one way or another to Iraq's programs of mass-destruction weapons. Prosecutors in Mannheim have just prepared a report on a businessman by the name of Bernd Schompeter, accused of selling equipment to Iraq for its supergun project. Another among numerous profiteers, Karl-Heinz Schaab, is the subject of a newly released documentary film, *Stealing the Fire*. Schaab stole a classified design for an advanced "supercritical" centrifuge for making nuclear bombs, sold it to Iraq, and then went to Baghdad to supervise the centrifuge's installation. After fleeing to Brazil, he was brought to trial in Germany and given a five-year sentence, which was immediately suspended. "I stumbled naively into this thing," in his words. The defense is as revealing as the judicial leniency. Chancellor Schroeder is in touch with the sympathies of his electorate—he came from behind to win his election. Anti-Americanism did its work for him.

France is more or less the opposite of Germany in the expression of its anti-Americanism. The population at large appreciates that Hitlerites or Stalinists would today be ruling the continent if not for the United States. In opinion polls, hardly more than one in ten people declare themselves anti-American, and a majority would understand and probably approve a go-it-alone U.S. campaign to overthrow Saddam Hussein and liberate Iraq.

Instead, anti-Americanism is a central project of the intellectual elite. In May 1944, with the war against Hitler still in progress, Hubert Beuve-Méry, the man about to found and edit *Le Monde*—far and away France's most influential paper—was already writing, "The Americans constitute a real danger for France." Their materialism, in his mystifying justification for this emotional outburst, does not have the "tragic grandeur" of German or Soviet totalitarianism. France's abject collapse in the face of Nazism and its idealization of Stalinism consummated a general intellectual confusion, at the center of which is a fountain of pure-running anti-Americanism. This is often extravagant to the point of farce. A journalist by the name of Thierry Meyssan has sprung to notoriety with a book called *L'Effroyable imposture* (*The Horrifying Fraud*), which claims that September 11 was carried out not by Islamist terrorists but by right-wing elements in the Washington administration with a plot to go to war to grab the Middle East and its oil. The book has sold more than 200,000 copies. Even *Le Monde* detected something totalitarian in this displacement of reality by fiction.

President Jacques Chirac is speaking strictly for the elite in his attempts to stymie American policy. The French proposal for two resolutions in the U.N. Security Council is designed to rescue Saddam Hussein. "The objective," Chirac observed at

Mr. Pryce-Jones, an NR senior editor, is the author of, among other books, *Paris in the Third Reich*.

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the outset of a carefully timed Middle East trip, "is to disarm Iraq, not to change the regime." *Le Monde* boasts in one headline, "Chirac makes Bush reverse." Another headline has "Toward an American reign in Iraq?" with immediately below it a typical cartoon entitled "Another America," showing all the good people demonstrating for peace while an angry little Bush glowers in the corner. The *Journal du Dimanche* asserts that "France has spoken, resisted, laid down the law, and its voice has been heard," crediting Chirac with nothing less than a miracle.

In the National Assembly, deputies jostle to denounce the United States for pursuing its own interests while they emphasize that France must do exactly the same. A so-called Bureau of International Operations coordinates the participation of 130 French firms in an annual trade fair that will soon take place in Baghdad. The French oil giant TotalFinaElf, for instance, will be able to enjoy Iraqi contracts only through appeasement of Saddam and the removal of sanctions. Chirac's minister of ecology, Roselyne Bachelot, just happens to be the founder of the Franco-Iraq Association. Tripping up the United States, such circles hope—and expect—that France will gain the support of Iraq and the Arab world, leaving the road to power and primacy open again.

By coincidence and with wonderful timeliness, two books have exploded simultaneously into the cozy slum of French intellectual life, exposing the underlying vanities and illusions of French anti-Americanism. Altogether breaking ranks, Philippe Roger in *L'Ennemi américain* and Jean-François Revel with his *L'Obsession anti-américaine* reach similar conclusions: that anti-Americanism is not related to whatever the United States might actually be or do, but reflects murky depths of the French psyche. Persistent divisiveness and repeated social failure, general loss of influence in the world and injured pride, have solidified into an inferiority complex. Taking it for granted that France ought to be the world's leading power, French intellectuals have long been accustomed to seeing America as a standing reproach. As Philippe Roger puts it, hatred of America is nourished on a "violent contempt of oneself."

Roger is an academic, teaching at one of France's prestigious colleges of higher education. His is the first study to reveal the extraordinary continuity of French anti-Americanism and its significance in the French view of themselves. Since the 18th century, the French have been treating America less as a real country than as a theater in which to work out fears and fantasies of their own. In the eyes of Enlightenment luminaries like Voltaire, Buffon, and Cornelius de Pauw, the New World was a pale and inadequate copy of the Old World, doomed by nature to remain so. "No opera!" was Stendhal's put-down, which leads in a straight line to Sartre's notorious observation that American cities offer no protection in an "immense and hostile space."

Successive generations of French intellectuals built stereotypes of the American as an errant and inferior European, a reprobate savage, a bone-headed Yankee, and of course a cowboy, the description applied to President Bush incessantly and instinctively throughout the French media. Examining what he actually found in the country rather than the notions in his head, Tocqueville was a lone exception, but few in France read him. The print order for his famous book on America, published in two volumes in 1835 and 1840, was 500 copies. So the fantasy soon took hold that an ignorant and boorish United States was deliberately conspiring to do France down.

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Two books have exploded simultaneously into the cozy slum of French intellectual life, exposing the underlying vanities and illusions of French anti-Americanism.

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As France lost its position as a power in what used to be called the Concert of Europe, its ruling and intellectual circles perfected the skill of deflecting blame away from themselves and onto the United States. At the time of the American Civil War, the French overwhelmingly backed the Confederacy, dreaming of nothing less than the dismemberment of the Union, which already looked likely to dominate them. Anti-Americanism was to become the only unifying principle among Frenchmen of the Left and the Right, unable to agree among themselves on the basics of the state. War and revolu-

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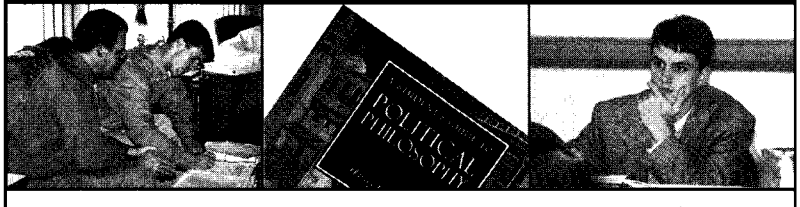

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tion have repeatedly demoralized them. Roger leaves the reader in no doubt that anti-Americanism for the French is a defense mechanism indispensable to their self-respect.

Jean-François Revel puts the same argument in a more immediate and polemical form. In previous books, he has championed freedom and democracy against totalitarianism with unmatched bravura—as exceptional in contemporary France as Tocqueville was in his day. He knows America well enough at first hand to dispose with authority of the Stendhal-Sartre line that it is a country without culture. With marvelous clarity and logic—much embellished with a sarcastic wit all his own—he digs out the resentment and envy which is at the core of anti-Americanism.

And if America is today the world's only superpower, it is because Europe abandoned the field. Europeans alone are responsible for concocting, and submitting to, the two absurd and criminal regimes that brought apocalypse to the continent. To add insult to injury, Europe is now trying to draw some sort of principle out of its impotence. As Revel rubs it in, "American unilateralism is the consequence, not the cause, of the reduction of power of the rest of the world." American interventions abroad, he points out, have often been in the interests of Muslims. Muslims in Afghanistan, Iraq, or elsewhere cannot rescue themselves from the assorted dictators, terrorists, and Islamists who condemn them to backwardness, and therefore it is only right for America to be doing so in their behalf, as not so long ago it liberated Europeans.

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If America is today the world's only superpower, it is because Europe abandoned the field.

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With a sale already well over 100,000, *L'Obsession anti-américaine* is unexpectedly on top of the non-fiction best-seller list in Paris. To Revel's surprise, even *Le Monde* gritted its teeth and gave him a good review. The French will come through, as they somehow always manage to do. With or without due deference to Roger or Revel, Chirac and his cabinet are well able to realize that a position taken against the United States in the Security Council risks losing France the last vestiges of its influence, condemning it to the outer darkness into which Schroeder has just cast Germany.

In the event of regime change in Iraq and the resumption of normality in that unhappy country, of course, the Herr Schaabs and Herr Schompeters, along with board members of TotalFinaElf and a hundred other French companies, will be full of self-congratulation as they board their flights in the treasure-hunt for contracts, quite as though they owed this turn of fortune to themselves and their handling of an awkward situation. But they may find that the new regime in Baghdad remembers their governments' record—and that Washington does, too. **NR**

Perils of 'The German Way'

What do these recent outbursts mean?

VICTOR DAVIS HANSON

THE problem with the recent German criticism of President Bush was not Chancellor Schroeder's willingness to voice unease with the purported American "adventure" in Iraq. Germany is a sovereign nation and can and must do as it sees fit. It has a perfect right to express its forebodings, forcefully. Moreover, no one—here or there—has ever envisioned concrete German help in freeing Iraq from Saddam Hussein.

So the chancellor's ploy was gratuitously rhetorical rather than substantive or of any import to our military efforts in the Gulf. The absence of a canteen or a handful of obsolete tanks is no great loss. That a self-righteous European socialist government trades with, rather than opposes, a Middle Eastern madman with weapons of mass destruction in a post–September 11 world is by now to be expected, rather than shocking.

Instead, American angst has derived from a variety of other considerations. First, the flurry of German anti-Americanism was *not* confined to Gerhard Schroeder. Fellow Socialist Ludwig Stiegler suggested that our president was akin to Julius Caesar—the firebrand who destroyed centuries of republican government and sought to lay the foundations of Roman imperial rule.

Herta Däubler-Gmelin, the minister of justice, trumped that, declaring, "Bush wants to divert attention from his domestic problems. It's a classic tactic. It's one that Hitler also used." Americans, it seems—who once rid Germany of Hitler, with very little help from the Germans themselves—are now to be properly slandered by Germans for being Hitler-like.

Even that surprising venom was not confined to Socialists in power, trolling for votes in economically depressed times by appealing to nationalism and the fears of a purportedly pacifist populace. Jürgen Möllemann of the Free Democrats spoke of the "intolerant, spiteful style" of some prominent Jews. His remarks echoed the anti-Semitism already voiced by former defense minister Rudolf Scharping when he complained that Mr. Bush was trying to please "a powerful, perhaps overly powerful, Jewish lobby."

Americans were especially perplexed about such choices of vocabulary. If even Socialists and leftists are reverting to the nomenclature of a half-century past, has the specter of

Mr. Hanson is a contributing editor of National Review Online. His latest book is *An Autumn of War: What America Learned from September 11 and the War on Terrorism.*

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German nationalism and belligerence really vanished? Consider some of the rhetoric. Schroeder promised that Germans would not simply "click their heels." He talked of the "German way" (*deutscher Weg*), stressing that Germany was a "modern" country where decisions will "be made in Berlin—and only in Berlin." A Mel Brooks movie could not have offered a better caricature of repressed nostalgia for the 1930s.

A cynic would see the new German belligerence as particularly opportunistic, coming as it does only *after* the Soviet threat has gone, *after* the dream of unification has been achieved, *after* Berlin has emerged as the capital of a new, "modern" Germany. The still more jaded might see in contemporary German socialism, pacifism, and relativism shades of a weak and decadent Weimar—with the attendant extreme reaction to it looming on the horizon. We sadly are accustomed to residual anti-Semitism in Germany, but when ex-officials there complain of the power of American Jewish constituencies in New York and Miami, the awful subtext is, of course, that there is no such problem now in Germany, because . . .

Finally and most disturbingly, Schroeder's antics did not, like Le Pen's nationalism, fail, but may well have won him the election. So it turns out that Minister Däubler-Gmelin was projecting. Which country, in fact, really did turn to nationalism—and anti-Semitism—to deflect domestic concern over a faltering economy and a reduced world influence?

Americans were especially surprised by the German invective because our history and relationships with Germany have always reflected our own goodwill. We have respected the postwar German people, whom we found confident, competent, self-reliant, and appreciative. After their horrific losses of civilians and territory in World War II, they did not turn to terrorism, but instead embraced democracy and sought to atone for the evil Hitler wrought. So to learn that the Marshall Plan, the Berlin Airlift, NATO, the American nuclear shield that protected free Germans from 400 Soviet divisions, and the recent near-automatic American support for German unification are apparently ancient history, came as another post–9/11 wake-up call. In turn, we must wonder whether Germans are really aware that the over 70,000 American troops on German soil alone allow Schroeder's government to continue to spend no more than 2 percent of GNP on defense, with the assurance that no hostile country would dare enter German air space.

In Europe these sudden outbursts have put neighbors east and west on notice. Indeed France, Holland, Italy, and the Eastern Europeans are more likely to strengthen, not weaken, their American ties. Astute politicians there may sense that there is something nasty brewing in Germany that trumps socialism, the EU, and all the other utopian pretensions that were supposed to have supplanted those silly 19th-century ideas like nationalism, status, and honor across the Rhine. If I were a Frenchman, Pole, Greek, or Czech, I would reexamine very carefully the fashionable anti-Americanism of the Continent, dissect it, and determine what, in fact, are its real undercurrents and repercussions—before the spooky German rhetoric is turned on them and we, in our disgust, are long gone from the scene.

Gerhard Schroeder by Roman Genn

Schroeder made a terrible mistake in the manner in which he launched his campaign of anti-Americanism. Had his ploy failed with the electorate, had he not unleashed his venom at mass rallies, had he not chosen such historic vocabulary, had friends and opponents denounced rather than echoed his attacks, Americans could pass it all off as election-style pyrotechnics. But given the opposite circumstances, we won't. Instead, in our pique and pride, we will remember past lax policies on Middle East terrorism (think the Munich Olympics) and realize that a number of the September 11 murderers refined their final plans on German soil, and that much of Saddam Hussein's purchases of the last decade have come from Germany. We grumble that the Germans—given their history—should have been the last to line up to fight fascists and the first to voice cheap anti-Americanism and anti-Semitism.

What will be the result of all this? Our elites and theirs claim that they will huddle together and quickly fix the problem. But I am not so sure. In the short term, I would imagine that the American military will be very wary of placing key military assets in Germany, lest, in the manner of France during the Libyan crisis, we are told that we cannot fly through German air space. Far more importantly, without fanfare we should probably gradually—say at the rate of 5,000 to 10,000 soldiers a year—either bring home or transfer Americans from Germany. Such a move is *vital* to restore clarity and health to our relationship and bring maturity to the Germans, who must understand that their nastiness in part derives from their very sense of inferiority to and dependence on us. Let them be grown-ups, rather than teenagers who loudly assert their independence

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from their parents as they drive to the mall—only to call fretting at midnight that the battery is dead.

It is their decision, not ours, whether they choose to adopt a policy akin to those of Sweden and Switzerland in line with their present defense expenditures, or wish to take a more active and muscular role in world affairs, as we would hope. For our own part, even if we choose not to reduce our overseas European commitments, we will find a number of neighboring countries eager to open replacement bases.

In a sense, Mr. Schroeder and other German leaders may have achieved their traditional aspirations: a unified country, with the largest population and economy in Europe, without enemies on the horizon, and now free to chart its own course. Fine, and more power to them. Moreover we should ensure that the German government does not feel it has to click its heels to anyone, simply accept that long-overdue reality, remain friends—but, most of all, begin *to come home*. It will

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Gerhard Schroeder has no idea of the repressed historic forces he has unleashed both at home and abroad.

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be healthier for all parties involved. And that fact may well usher in a slow return, after a half-century, to an inevitable bilateralism with particular European states—with all its attendant dangers that we have seen in that part of the world over the last 130 years.

Gerhard Schroeder has no idea of the repressed historic forces he has unleashed both at home and abroad—but

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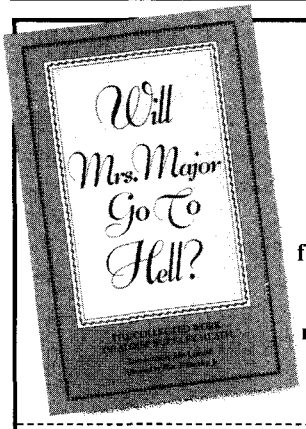

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New Myths for Old

The case of *The Four Feathers*

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

As the old showbiz joke goes, *The Four Feathers* is a story so good not even a gifted director could ruin it. The 1902 novel by the English writer A. E. W. Mason has been filmed no fewer than six times; the 1939 Zoltan Korda version has deservedly attained classic status. This is a rattling good tale about themes—love, loyalty, and the conquest of fear—so deeply etched in the human heart that audiences will respond to them even across the boundaries of time and space.

Audiences, perhaps; but can these themes triumph over the political and moral divisions that separate the Victorians from modern Hollywood? Has it become impossible to make a film about imperialism that does not condemn it? Or tell a story celebrating honor in an uncomplicated way? Or describe a conflict between Westerners and people of color without overtones of racial superiority?

The answers to these questions turn out to be always complicated and sometimes surprising. The word from Hollywood was that the 2002 version of *The Four Feathers*, by the Indian director Shekhar Kapur, would "subvert" the imperialist flag-waving of the earlier versions. And Kapur certainly sets out both to deconstruct the notions of honor driving the plot and to demolish the arrogant assumptions of imperial superiority allegedly underlying Mason's story and the British Empire's adventures in the Sudan. But it is fair to say that the flash and glitter of the imperial subject matter—the scarlet uniforms of the young British officers, the shine on the regimental silver, the ladies' billowing ball-gowns, the still-haunting idea of chivalry—go a long way to subvert Kapur's anti-imperialist intentions.

Uniforms convey their own message. If you want to convey arrogance and cruelty, gray German uniforms are the ticket; formal British scarlet evokes a much more gallant set of associations. As for the anti-imperialist insight that braggart speeches about honor and patriotism often end in incompetence, cowardice, and defeat, that can hardly subvert a story that was about a man's attempt to confront his own fear of battle in the first place. The man in question is Mason's central character, Harry Feversham, a young British officer who resigns his commission a week before his regiment embarks for war in the Sudan. Three of his friends send him white feathers—an accusation of cowardice—and his fiancée, Ethne, adds a fourth, breaking their engagement. Crushed by the social disgrace faced by a known coward in late Victorian England, Harry sets off to redeem his lost honor by rescuing the three friends from various awful fates in the Sudan. Eventually, Harry hands back all four feathers and marries Ethne.

So much for the bare bones of the story. Almost every version of it, however, differs from the others in significant ways.

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The original novel was a complex love story as much as an adventure—one with two heroes and a heroine, each seeking to behave honorably to the other two. Although she gives Harry the fourth feather and resolves never to see him again, Ethne does so with the knowledge that her love for him is still strong. When his best friend, Jack Durrance, returns from the Sudan a blind hero, she accepts his proposal of marriage from high-minded motives of duty and pity. But Durrance, previously a slightly dull fellow, deals with his blindness by developing greater powers of sympathy and insight. The second half of the novel describes how he gradually uncovers Ethne's motives and breaks their engagement on the grounds that self-sacrifice cannot be the basis for an enduring marriage. Harry returns a hero, Ethne marries *him*, and the novel ends with Durrance sailing back to the East, alone but having overcome his blindness and able to move freely in the world again.

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Though the 2002 version of The Four Feathers is beautifully filmed, the movie suffers from a fatal vagueness at almost all levels.

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Korda's 1939 version was a masterpiece of cinematic compression. It moved the events of the novel from the 1880s to Kitchener's successful campaign against the Khalifa in 1898 (when the young Winston Churchill took part in the last British cavalry charge at the battle of Omdurman). Otherwise the film was very faithful even to the book's occasional complexities: It gave a full account of the frustrated courtship of Ethne and Durrance, and it explained very clearly the motives that prompted both Harry's resignation and his subsequent redemption. To pass in the Sudan as a local without Arabic, Harry persuades an Egyptian doctor to brand his forehead with the mark of the Sengalis, a Sudanese tribe whose tongues were torn out for rebellion against the Mahdi. Explaining his plans, he reveals that his former colleagues see him as a coward. "So be a coward and be happy," says the practical Egyptian (the hint of a stereotype here, perhaps). "I was a coward and I wasn't happy," Harry replies—and gives a subdued smile, for, having just voluntarily endured a very painful ordeal, he knows that he has already conquered his fears: a fear of cowardice itself, of letting down his comrades, and of disgracing his military family, rather than a simple fear of battle.

There is nothing as vivid or as memorable in the 2002 version. Though it is beautifully filmed, with glorious footage of both the Sudanese desert (actually Morocco) and a Victorian-looking London, the film suffers from a fatal vagueness at almost all levels. It is not quite clear in personal terms what concept of honor drives Harry and Ethne, or in political terms why the British Army is heading for the Sudan. These are very significant failures—for they suggest that the filmmakers shrank from confronting certain facts. Perhaps they discovered that making an anti-imperialist film was not such a straightforward enterprise as they had first envisaged—that it might require quite as much suppression of the truth as making an imperialist film in 1939. Or in these complicated days when political correctness coexists frustratedly alongside a post–9/11 patriotism, perhaps making an anti-imperialist film requires even more suppression.

As both Jonathan Foreman in *The Weekly Standard* and James Bowman in *The American Spectator* have argued in powerful reviews, the British Empire depended upon the self-mastery of its people, and especially of its officer class, to rule a quarter of the world. Such virtues as honor and duty were not simply upheld rhetorically; those who failed to fulfill the duties of their station faced grave social penalties. An officer whose cowardice was believed to be responsible for the death of the French emperor's son in a South African skirmish was ostracized by his fellows and spent two decades of regimental meals without a exchanging a word of conversation with them. The discipline such penalties sustained could produce heroism on a mass scale: The Royal Marines on the troopship *Birkenhead* stood in formation in deck until the waves closed over their heads to enable the ship to remain stable while the women and children disembarked in lifeboats. To be sure, there was occasional cowardice and military incompetence, but on the whole the imperial edifice was securely founded in self-sacrificial virtues.

DECADENCE OF HONOR

In the 1939 *Four Feathers* this concept of honor is well put by June Duprez as Ethne: "We were born into a tradition, a code that we must obey even if we do not believe. And we must obey, Harry, because the pride and happiness of everyone around us depends on our obedience." James Bowman argues that this speech represents a decline from the self-confident Victorian age, when people did actually believe in their traditions. To be sure, there was such a decline of imperial and religious conviction; yet mass social beliefs are always sustained in part by traditions and loyalties that are fundamentally non-rational. The Victorians knew this well and designed their stigmas and incentives to work when conscious belief failed. In 2002, however, we lack both the concepts and the words to express this kind of conviction. Patriotism lacks a respectable vocabulary. So when Kate Hudson as Ethne sets out to explain why she is giving Harry a white feather, she has the greatest difficulty in doing so. Their entire conversation is a rambling search for meaning that is never reached. As Bowman says, she is able to fathom that "it's not just about us," but not to rise to the next stage of defining who or what it is "about"—family, friends, class, or nation.

The real hero of the 2002 version is Abou Fatma—a minor character in the original novel, a local trader who helps Harry make his way safely through enemy territory and find a hidden packet of letters from General Gordon. He is brave, resourceful, and secondary; he does not appear in the 1939 version at all. But in Kapur's film he is central—for he is a black enemy of the Sudanese Moslems. He saves Harry's life when the young man collapses in the desert. He helps him join the British forces disguised as a native bearer. He protects him

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against the Khalifa's spies suspicious of this mysterious arrival. He rides to warn the British of a forthcoming ambush (and is ignored, insulted, and lashed for his pains by boneheaded officers too arrogant to accept help from a black). He gets Harry into the Omdurman prison where one of Harry's friends, Colonel Trench, is held, and then gets in himself to bring food to the starving Brits. He organizes their joint escape from the prison, carrying an exhausted Trench on his shoulders. He provides Harry with wise advice throughout the film, guiding him through the dangerous byways of the Sudan. Unlike Harry—who becomes brave but is no superman—Abou Fatma is without weakness. Without his protection, Harry would be a goner, his attempt to redeem his honor and return the four feathers ending in an unknown grave in the desert.

In order to escape the imperialist taint of white racial condescension, Kapur's film delivers the hardly less racist message that one black man is worth a dozen honkies. Indeed, the film's flirtation with inverted racism goes further even than this: We are given the clear impression that Abou Fatma murders an Egyptian officer who has maltreated and insulted him. No hint of moral disapproval of this is shown. We conclude that Abou Fatma has avenged himself and his honor in the direct way suitable to a brutal and unforgiving world. Acting on what the self-deceiving moralistic British might see as primitive notions of vengeance, he prevails and goes on to subvert their ostensibly more advanced notions of honor and Christian duty by carrying their defeated exponents on his back to safety. In other words, he is the Nazis' Aryan superman in blackface. And the film ends with him, not Durrance, setting off into the middle distance, riding his camel to the rescue of some other floundering imperialist.

Abou Fatma plays this distinguished role, of course, in order to help salvage the film from neo-imperialist nostalgia (which may strike some people in Hollywood as a genuine danger, at a time when the U.S. is considering establishing a client regime in Baghdad). Most of the other scenes in the Sudan serve the same anti-imperialist purpose—demonstrating military reverses for the arrogant and incompetent British by resourceful Sudanese Moslems who systematically outwit and defeat them. As Foreman demonstrates in hilarious detail, however, all this is historical bosh. The British did not despise their Sudanese enemy—they praised him, in Kipling's words, as "a first-class fightin' man" who "broke a British square." Though the Sudanese did break the British square on two occasions, the British reformed and won the battles. Nor did the imperial armies despise "native" military assistance in general, as they are shown doing in the film; some of their armies were recruited from the empire's more martial peoples, who were held in high respect. At the time of the Sudanese campaigns the British Army, reformed under highly professional soldiers like Garnet Wolseley and Kitchener, was a small, efficient fighting force with a string of victories to its credit. And the Anglo-Egyptian forces won every major battle they fought in both Sudanese campaigns.

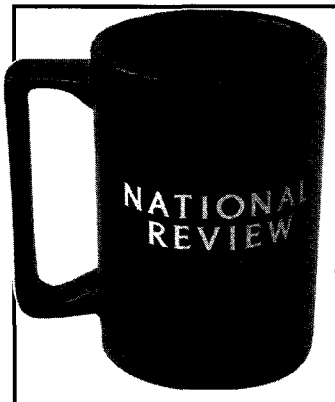
■

Abou Fatma 'subverts' the most basic anti-imperialist myth of all: namely, that it was an entirely exploitative enterprise.

■

In short, anti-imperialism is more reliant upon the production of myths than imperialism itself. Paradoxically Abou Fatma—though an anti-imperialist myth himself—actually "subverts" the most basic anti-imperialist myth of all: namely, that it was an entirely exploitative enterprise. One of the few details we learn of this mysterious figure is that he is from a "slave tribe," and that would indeed explain his loyalty to the British against all the odds—for the British were in the Sudan in the first place to end slavery there. Wherever British imperialism expanded in the 19th century, the slaves were freed. In the Sudan the Mahdi led his rebellion against the freeing of the black animist slaves like Abou Fatma that the London-based Anti-Slavery Society and most civilized opinion demanded—and for which the devoutly Christian General Gordon gave his life at Khartoum.

Perhaps the notion of a benevolent imperialism is too heretical, too subversive, too "irreverent" for Hollywood. Yes, there were crimes and outrages—but there was also idealism and the spread of law and education. After Kitchener defeated the Khalifa at Omdurman, he returned to England to raise funds for a Moslem school in Khartoum. Kipling put this comment into the mouth of a Bengal Moslem teacher addressing the Sudanese on the topic of English imperialism: "They do not consider the Meaning of Things; they consult not creed nor clan. / Behold, they clap the slave on the back, and behold, he ariseth a man! / They terribly carpet the earth with dead, and before their cannon cool, / They walk unarmed by twos and threes to call the living to school." Not perhaps Kipling's finest poem, but a truer account of imperialism than the newly polished *Four Feathers*. **NR**



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THE LONG VIEW

By Rob Long

Transcript from *Larry King Live*, November 12th, 2003:

LARRY KING: Wilmington, Delaware! You're on with former North Korean strongman Kim Jong Il.
CALLER: Oh, hi.
KIM JONG IL: Hello, caller. I recently visited the Barnes & Noble bookstore in Wilmington and I enjoyed my stay very much. It is a very beautiful place.
CALLER: Thank you!
LARRY KING: What's your question?
CALLER: I just want to know how he decided to give up power in North Korea and leave peacefully. Also, I want to know if that's a mousse or a gel in his hair. I have a lot of Asian-American friends and they have a hard time getting that kind of lift from their hair, so maybe Kim has some tips for them.
LARRY KING: What about it, Kim?
KIM JONG IL: It's just a natural wave. I use no special product.
CALLER: Oh.
LARRY KING: And what about the other thing?
KIM JONG IL: Oh, that. Yes, well, I realized that if I stayed in power, eventually the Americans would invade and there would be a war and I would be killed.
LARRY KING: Along with millions of your countrymen.
KIM JONG IL: Well, yes, that too. So when the offer came from Simon & Schuster it just seemed like the right thing to do at the right time.
LARRY KING: Do you miss it?
KIM JONG IL: Not really. Oh, sure, I miss the parades and the giant pictures of me and seeing my head everywhere in stone and stuff.
LARRY KING: And the ladies?
KIM JONG IL: Very different situation these days, let me tell you. Much better to be a Dear Leader than just some schmo on a book tour.
LARRY KING: We're on with Kim Jong Il! Tomorrow, the whole hour with funnyman Charlie Callas!

Transcript from *Good Day Little Rock! With Bill Clinton and Anne Heche*, December 3rd, 2003:

BILL CLINTON: . . . just delicious! Just absolutely delicious. And what do you call it?
KIM JONG IL: Kimchee.
ANNE HECHE: Kim whaaa?
[audience laughter]
KIM JONG IL: Kimchee. It's a kind of Korean snack.
BILL CLINTON: Man, it's good. And so what is it?
KIM JONG IL: Well, it's really not just one thing. Kimchee refers to an assortment of pickled and preserved dishes—cabbage, garlic, radishes . . .
BILL CLINTON: Not great for the breath, huh?
[audience laughter]
KIM JONG IL: I'm sorry?
BILL CLINTON: All that cabbage and garlic, I mean, not great for the breath.
KIM JONG IL: Oh yes. I understand. Of course, in the People's Republic, we were not so concerned with such things. Our main concern was to preserve the shining example of my father, the Great Leader, Kim Il Sung, and his triumphant quest to create a nation of harmonious workers and peasants.
ANNE HECHE: I love your eyewear.
KIM JONG IL: Thank you.
ANNE HECHE: Isn't it great, folks?
[audience applause]
ANNE HECHE: I just love how square and geometric it is!
KIM JONG IL: As you can see, I have a round face. So I chose a frame that would offset that.
ANNE HECHE: Great choice! I wish more men would pay attention to details like that. But can I be honest? I'm not crazy about the jumpsuit.
KIM JONG IL: You don't like it? It's very comfortable.
BILL CLINTON: It looks comfortable. Do they make them in a 48?
KIM JONG IL: I don't know. I can call my jumpsuit guy and ask.
BILL CLINTON: Better make that a 50, with all the kimchee I'm eating! This stuff is fabulous!

Transcript from *The O'Reilly Factor*, December 12th, 2003:

O'REILLY: . . . in your book, and I'm quoting you now, in your book *A Boy Named Kim* you say, "I looked into Jimmy Carter's eyes and I told him we'd stop building nukes, and I knew then that I was lying, that I would continue to build nukes, continue to arm my country, and continue to threaten my neighbors." Mr. Kim, why should anyone, any American, forgive you for that?
KIM JONG IL: Well, Bill, you're taking that way out of context—
O'REILLY: What context? Come off it, Mr. Kim!
KIM JONG IL: —yes, okay, I lied to Jimmy Carter. But at the time, Mr. O'Reilly—
O'REILLY: You just admitted it! You admit you lied!
KIM JONG IL: —but at the time, if I can finish, can I finish, please? At the time, I didn't think it was such a big deal to lie to Jimmy Carter. To be honest, I didn't really know who Jimmy Carter was. I thought I was just having a meet-'n'-greet with a visiting delegation from the American Communist Party—
O'REILLY: Oh come on! Oh come on!
KIM JONG IL: No, *you* come on! I mean, the idiotic smile, the way he pretended that the hotel was just as good as one in New York, the way he said that the department store we set up reminded him of the Wal-Mart in Americus, Georgia, the way he looked entertained by the four-hour dance recital, the sandals . . . I mean, it's an easy mistake to make.
O'REILLY: You're a criminal, Mr. Kim! An international criminal!
KIM JONG IL: I wasn't really going to use any of it! I just wanted it!
O'REILLY: For what? To kill Americans, Mr. Kim?
KIM JONG IL: Haven't you ever done something to get attention, Bill? Haven't you ever been so, just so freakin' against the wall that you do something stupid just to break out of—
O'REILLY: Now the psychobabble! This is a no-spin zone, Mr. Kim. You wanted the bombs so you could drop them on—
KIM JONG IL: —falling apart, my father's work and my life and—
O'REILLY: —and now to see you at Le Cirque 2000 and downtown at Nobu and—
KIM JONG IL: —when did we become such an unforgiving people? When did we forget that—
O'REILLY: —in some kind of cage where we can poke at you with—
KIM JONG IL: —and the Paxil was expired, and we still don't know what effect that had on my—
O'REILLY: —and drag your—
KIM JONG IL: —time to move on. The American people want to talk about the economy and health care and—
O'REILLY: —like in ancient Roman times. Well, you're a sick puppy, Mr. Kim, but I respect that you came on *The Factor*. The book is *A Boy Named Kim* and it's available now.
KIM JONG IL: Number one on Amazon!

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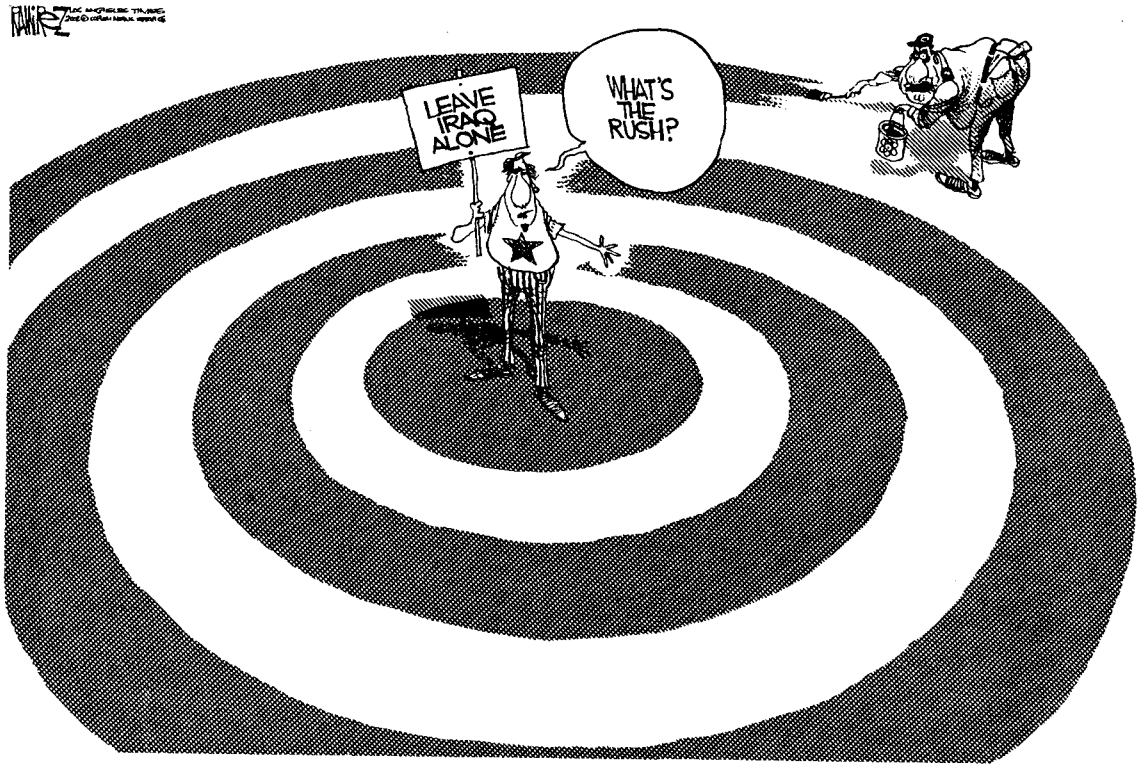

"I can't decide between a hero sandwich and a power lunch."

GEPHARDT PERSISTS

Dick's not getting any younger;
Rivals tugging at his shirt
Only make him gallop faster,
Kicking up the Beltway dirt.
Inching toward the icky center,
He's been beastly toward Saddam
While, athwart a sagging prie-dieu,
Praying that the markets bomb.

—W. H. VON DREELE

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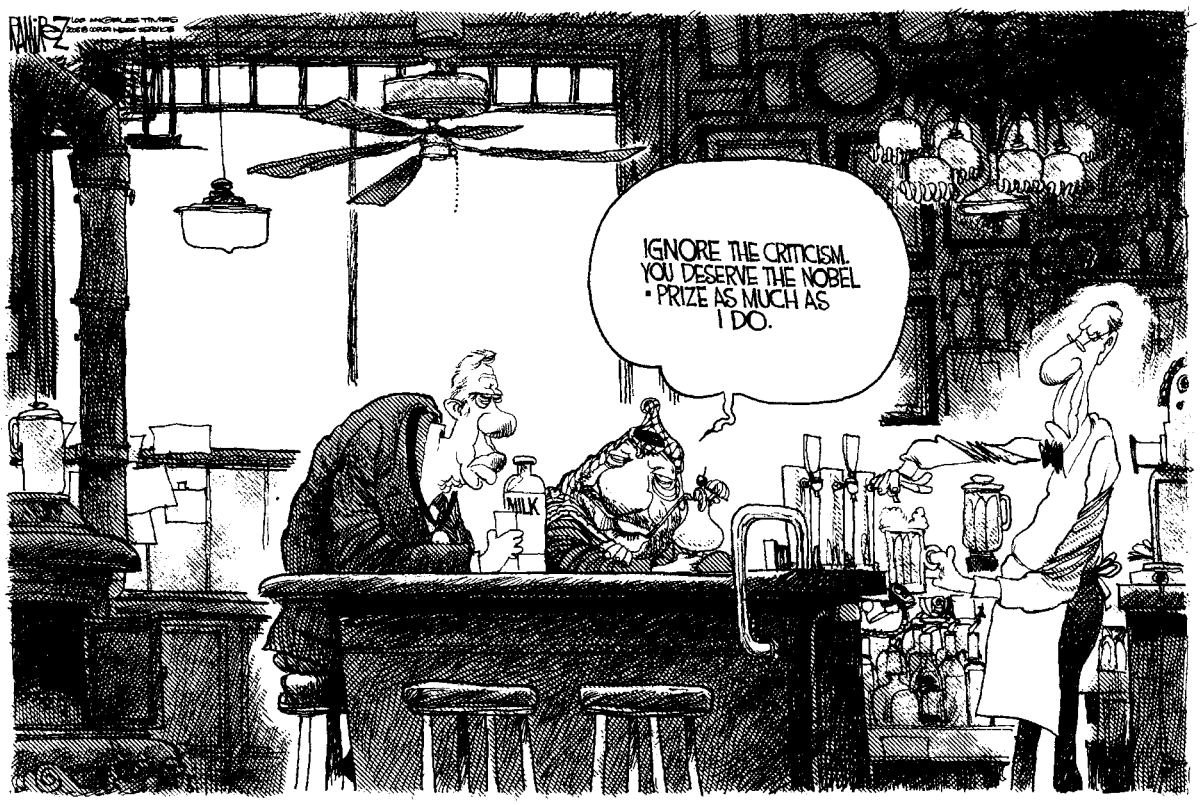

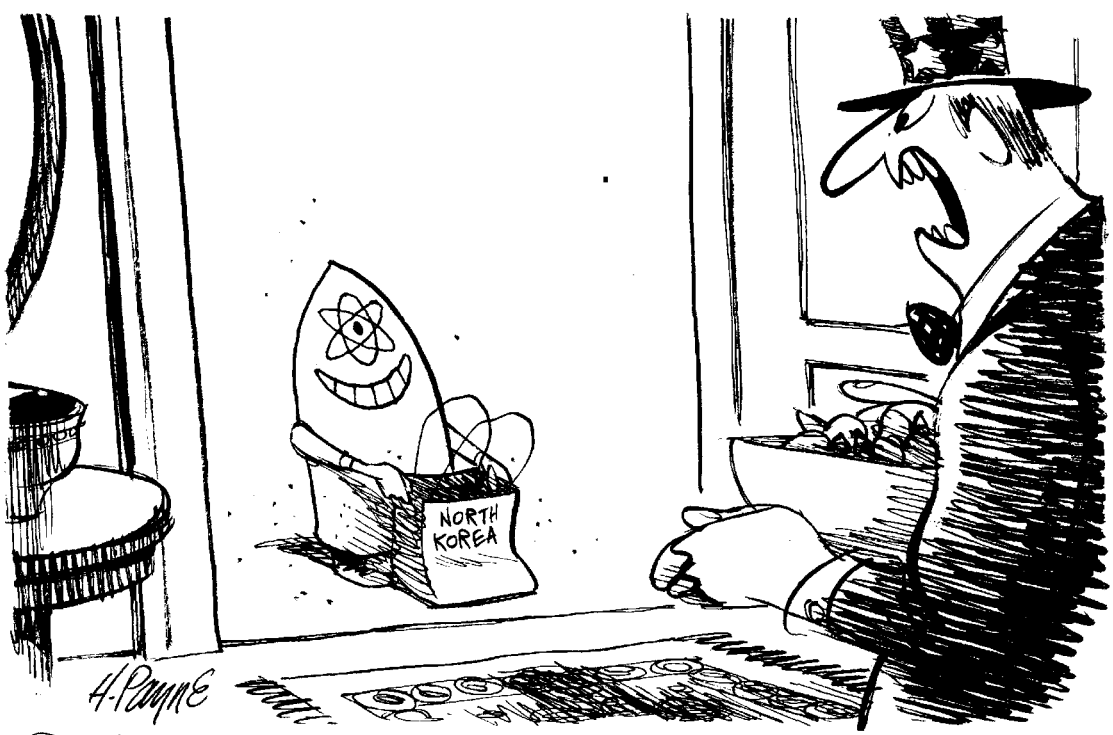

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What Is a Man?

ANTHONY DANIELS

The Blank Slate: The Modern Denial of Human Nature, by Steven Pinker (Viking, 528 pp., $27.95)

PATIENTS often ask me why they do the things they do. Naturally, they inquire only after their bad habits and actions, such as drinking too much or burgling houses; their good habits and actions are, to them at least, self-explanatory, as being manifestations of their true or innermost selves, and thus arousing no curiosity. I ask these patients what would count as a satisfactory explanation of their behavior, and not one of them has ever been able to answer me. Man is a mystery so deep that we don't even know what a solution to it would be like.

Of course, human nature is often invoked to explain human conduct, especially when that conduct appalls. But human nature is a slippery concept; and so great is the variety of human behavior over time and geography that many intellectuals have denied that man has any invariant nature at all. History and culture, it is said, have freed man of his biological inheritance.

Steven Pinker's object in this long book is threefold: to rehabilitate the idea of human nature, to give it some flesh, and to explain why there has been such a persistent denial by intellectuals that man has such a nature.

Very little reflection should be necessary to establish that man must have a nature, otherwise he would hardly be distinguishable from an amoeba or indeed from any other kind of creature. The fact that man—and only man—has developed language, and that, barring neurological catastrophe, every human being learns to speak a native language, should be more than sufficient to establish that there must be at least some invariant and inborn human propensities that we can call his nature.

Mr. Daniels is a doctor, novelist, and journalist in England. Among his books is *Life at the Bottom: The Worldview That Makes the Underclass.*

MIT professor Steven Pinker

It is no accident, as the Marxists used to say, that it should be a neurolinguist and follower of Noam Chomsky who should seek to rehabilitate the concept of an invariant human nature. Not only is it by now pretty well established that human beings have an innate capacity to learn language, an ability that cannot be explained by any environmental factor (puppies and kittens don't learn to speak even in the most disputatious of households), but language is a rule-governed system that is nevertheless infinite in its capacity to generate novelty. In a sense, then, we might say that human nature is to human conduct as grammar is to language. It lays down the rules or parameters, but does not fully determine any actual behavior. Thus, the search for social status, which is a biological inheritance from our evolutionary forebears, does not mean that I must stab a passerby who "disses" me, or indulge in insider trading on the stock exchange, but it does mean I will strive to establish myself in one way or another.

Where does the denial of human nature come from? It would surely amaze the great writers of literature to hear that there was no such thing as human nature, for otherwise their efforts at transcendence of their own time and place would have been in vain: Shakespeare could appeal only to Renaissance Englishmen and Chekhov only to prerevolutionary bourgeois Russians. But in fact they both speak to us directly, because an invariant nature underlies all human conduct, and they are able to show it to us with unusual clarity.

Pinker says that the main opposition to the idea of human nature has come from left-wing utopianism, which sees man as a blank slate upon which, as Mao once famously said, the most beautiful characters can be written. This crackbrained idea was responsible for untold misery and murder during the last century, though its proponents were (or claimed to be) in part reacting against the crude social Darwinism that saw nature as red in tooth and claw, man as an indistinguishable part of nature, and therefore man himself as inescapably red in tooth and claw. Since the Nazi horror seemed to derive from this horrible view of things, any idea that could remotely lead to it via the slippery slope—such as that of an indelible human nature—had to be opposed, whatever the evidence in its favor. Pinker redresses the balance by pointing out the horrible political consequences of the blank-slate hypothesis, responsible for even more deaths.

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The concept of a biologically based human nature is also, says Pinker, opposed by the religious Right, which fears that it will both undermine the concept of personal responsibility and empty the world of divine mystery. If human nature is just another part of nature, it can be investigated by natural science; there is no room left for the spiritual. Religious people no more want to have the heart of their mystery plucked out than Hamlet wanted his plucked out by Rosencrantz.

The question naturally arises as to whether we, that is to say mankind, are any nearer to plucking out the heart of our mystery than was Shakespeare. Thanks to science, says Pinker, we are. We know a lot about the genome, and the neurosciences advance apace. Evolutionary sociobiology explains our social behavior satisfactorily. All that remains to fill in are the details, but the outline is clear. At last we understand ourselves.

I confess that all this put me in mind of Moleschott, the Dutch materialist philosopher of the 19th century who confidently stated that the brain secreted thought as the liver secreted bile, and consequently that all metaphysical questions had, in essence, been answered. Pinker is a 21st-century Moleschott: better informed than Moleschott, of course, and more scientifically sophisticated, but a Moleschott nonetheless.

Pinker writes extremely well and disdains to hide his meaning behind obscurity. This demonstrates that he is intellectually honest. Moreover, he is very learned, quoting from a huge variety of highbrow sources—from technical papers to Shakespeare, Alexander Pope, and Adam Smith—as well as from popular culture to prove that he is, despite his erudition, a democrat. There are occasional mistakes, to be expected in a book of this length and breadth; for example, he misunderstands Hume on the non-derivability of moral principles from statements of empirical fact. But he nonetheless gives the impression of scrupulosity in the handling of both facts and sources.

At the end of the book, however, one feels a certain dissatisfaction, as if one had eaten a hugely copious meal consisting entirely of roughage. Pinker believes that he has satisfactorily provided a naturalistic account of man, so that no metaphysical mystery remains. There is no question of the heroism of his effort, or his depth of knowledge, but there is nonetheless something facile in his worldview, a thinness that becomes increasingly evident.

■

Is mankind any nearer to plucking out the heart of our mystery than was Shakespeare? Pinker says yes.

■

And, for all the new understanding of human nature that the book trumpets, there is little here that is actually new. Moreover, the alleged understanding is all ex post facto—which means, because life is lived forward rather than backward, the theory is utterly useless as a guide to how to conduct ourselves. It might help us to explain what we have done, but will not help us decide what to do. This wouldn't matter so much if no extravagant claims had been made on behalf of man's allegedly new and unprecedented self-understanding brought about by science, but the book is intended as a sketch of a completely satisfactory philosophy.

In fact, there is a contradiction running through the book that completely vitiates Pinker's efforts, though he does not notice it. Not wishing to lose caste as a liberal, which he might easily do if he left uncorrected the impression created by his insistence on the role of inheritance in human behavior and abilities, Pinker adheres firmly to such values as equality. He is at pains to point out that the equality he means is not derived from any actually observable human equality, since there is none; the equality to which he refers is ethical or moral. This is a point to which he returns with insistence, time and again, so it is strongly held. The equality of women with men, he says, is not dependent upon their actual identity or equivalence to men, for to make it so dependent would be to put it at risk of empirical research that demonstrated ineradicable biological differences between the sexes (such research as, he concedes, already actually exists). If the sexes are equal, it must be for freely chosen ethical reasons. In other words, Pinker's "ought" can no more be derived from his "is" than Hume would have predicted. "Vice and virtue," said Hume, "are not qualities in objects, but perceptions in the mind."

This catches Pinker on the horns of an insoluble dilemma. Either ethical prescriptions are derivable from observable facts, such as human inequality, or they are not, in which case the metaphysical status of moral judgments remains untouched by considerations of human nature. He rejects the first proposition, but does not see the implication of his acceptance of the second: that a complete naturalistic explanation of man is impossible, at least by man himself. I say this, though I am no more religious than Pinker.

Kant knew what he was talking about when he said that two things fill the mind with ever-increasing awe: the starry heavens above and the moral law within. Pinker is not wrong in having tried to explain man to himself, but he is wrong in thinking he has succeeded, even partially. Knowledge, as Hume said, is only ignorance postponed: The answers to the biggest questions forever elude us. Sending out sociobiology to solve the mysteries of human existence is like protecting yourself against a hurricane with a bus ticket. **NR**

TAKING A WALK ON SUNDAY

Today we walked through the quiet streets of Claremont
and the sunlit, park-like grounds of the colleges
with their wide walks and monumental trees.
Over our heads was a sky of the clearest blue,
like the clear blue sky of the mind over the page,
and as we walked, with the sunlight warm on our skin,
it was easy, for once, to feel important and good,
as if we were being read, and understood.

—MICHAEL CREAGAN

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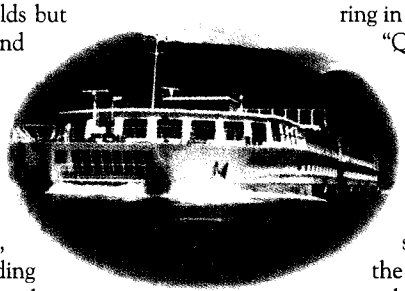

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Sat/May 3	Munich			city tour/lunch
Sun/May 4	Munich/Passau		7:00PM	afternoon transfer to *Mozart* evening cocktail reception
Mon/May 5	Durnstein, Austria Vienna, Austria	9:30AM 5:30PM	12:300PM (overnight)	afternoon seminar
Tues/May 6	Vienna, Austria		7:30PM	late-night smoker
Wed, May 7	Esztergom, Hungary Budapest, Hungary	8:00AM 2:00PM	10:30AM (overnight)	late-morning seminar
Thurs/May 8	Budapest, Hungary		4:30PM	afternoon seminar evening cocktail reception
Fri/May 9	Bratislava, Slovakia	9:30AM	2:00PM	afternoon seminar late-night smoker
Sat/May 10	Melk, Austria Grein, Austria	9:00AM 5:30PM	2:00PM 7:00PM	evening cocktail reception
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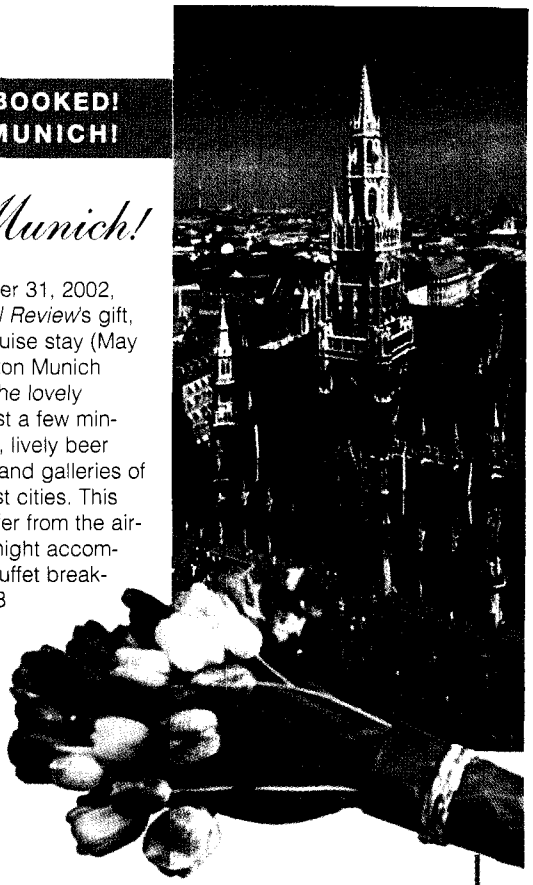

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( )

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		3,999B	FL	Fort Lauderdale	1,166C			3,887B		St. Louis	1,166C			3,855B		Philadelphia	995C			3,909B
	Tucson	1,390C			3,966B	N	Indianapolis	1,166C			3,966B	NC	Charlotte	1,109C			3,795B		Nashville	1,109C
		4,190B		Miami	1,166C			3,966B	NJ	Newark	974C			3,909B		Pittsburgh	1,082C			3,909B
CA	Los Angeles	1,284C			3,966B	KY	Louisville	1,109C			3,774B	OK	Oklahoma City	1,191C			3,882B	UT	Salt Lake City	1,345C
		4,084B		Orlando	1,166C			3,909B	NV	Las Vegas	1,390C			3,991B	RI	Providence	1,055C			4,145B
	Sacramento	1,390C			3,966B	LA	New Orleans	1,166C			4,190B	OH	Cincinnati	1,109C			3,855B	WA	Seattle	1,366C
		4,190B		Tampa	1,166C			3,966B	NM	Albuquerque	1,345C			3,909B	TX	Austin	1,191C			4,136B
	San Francisco	1,230C			3,966B	MA	Boston	968C			4,145B		Cleveland	1,109C			3,991B	WI	Milwaukee	1,166C
		4,030B	GA	Atlanta	1,045C			3,768B	NY	Albany	1,055C			3,909B		Dallas/FW	1,147C			3,966B
CO	Denver	1,236C			3,845B	MI	Detroit	1,101C			3,855B	OR	Portland	1,336C			3,947B			
		4,036B	HI	Honolulu	2,170C			3,901B		Buffalo	1,055C			4,136B		Houston (IAH)	1,147C			
CT	Hartford	1,055C			4,970B	MN	Mnpls/St. Paul	1,166C			3,855B	PA	Allentown	1,082C			3,947B			
		3,855B	ID	Boise	1,390C			3,966B		NYC/JFK	974C			3,882B		San Antonio	1,191C			
DC	Wash/Dulles	1,055C			4,190B	MO	Kansas City	1,166C			3,774B		Harrisburg	1,082C			3,991B			

IMPORTANT NOTES: 1. Air fares are subject to change without prior notice. A $109pp air tax has been included in the above quoted fares, and is subject to change without prior notice. 2. These air add-ons apply to the cruise or cruise + pre-cruise package in Munich. All transfers for air/sea passengers are included. Air costs may be slightly higher for guests purchasing a post-cruise package. 3. Should you elect to provide your own air transportation, and should you be eligible for the pre-cruise package in Munich, note that transfers from the airport to the Hilton Hotel in Munich are not included. Transfers from the Hotel to the ship and the ship to the Hotel are included. Schedule your arrival in Munich for May 2nd (afternoon). Your return flight from Munich should not be arranged before 12:00 noon on May 11th. 3. Should you wish to deviate your air from the "standard" schedule,Peter Deilmann Cruises charges $75pp for this service and there may also be an increase in the cost of the flight. All requests must be sent in writing to The Cruise Authority. Air deviation fees are non-refundable. 4. Any special seat assignments or other requests must be made directly with the participating air carrier. You will receive your air schedule approximately 30 days prior to departure date. 5. If one of the home gateways listed above isn't convenient for you, you may arrange to fly to New York/JFK, Newark/EWR, or Washington Dulles/IAD in order to connect to the trans-Atlantic flight. Trans-Atlantic flights typically depart between 4PM and 7PM–yplan to arrive in Munich by 2pm EST. Call The Cruise Authority for details.

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A Witness

BRIAN C. ANDERSON

The Dawn of Universal History: Selected Essays from a Witness to the Twentieth Century, by Raymond Aron (Basic, 544 pp., $35)

JEAN-PAUL SARTRE's apologias for Stalin and Mao; Michel Foucault's praise for Iran's Islamic revolutionaries; the recent Parisian bestseller that claimed September 11 was an elaborate right-wing hoax—all too often, France's intellectual life has shown contempt for the hard-won decencies of liberal democracy and become infatuated with madness and tyranny. Yet one giant of 20th-century French thought always stood rocklike against the nonsense that swirled around him: the philosopher and social thinker Raymond Aron.

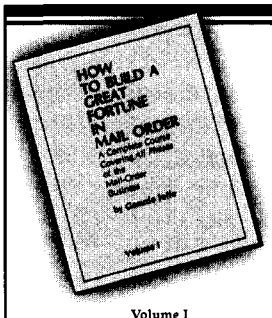
In an amazingly productive career that spanned from the late 1930s until his death in 1983, Aron defended liberty and reason against their totalitarian and irrationalist enemies with every word he wrote. He was the anti-Sartre, the anti-Foucault. Where they were swept away by deadly romantic enthusiasms, he remained ironic, sensible, ever aware of the tragic turns of history and the fragility of free societies. And how much he wrote! He authored more than 40 books, on subjects ranging from international relations to the discontents of modernity. In addition to his scholarly outpourings, he was one of the premier political journalists in European history, writing weekly commentary for *Le Figaro*, *L'Express*, and other newspapers and magazines—liberal as well as conservative. Aron's influence as thinker and teacher (first at the Sorbonne and later at the Collège de France) helped spark a resurgence in serious French political thought, such as one finds in the work of his students (including the brilliant political philosopher Pierre Manent) and in the pages of the prestigious quarterly journal he founded, *Commentaire*.

This new collection of Aron's writings, much of it translated for the first time, is an abridgement of a book assembled by his friends and former students and published in France a few years ago. A history of the 20th century—the age of extremes—it is also a gateway to Aron's mind, and a work of arresting timeliness.

The collection gets its title from a 1961 essay, included here as a final chapter, in which Aron seeks to unravel the mystery of his times—the bloodiest in human history. In the essay, Aron distinguishes between what is unique to modern history and the permanent features of human nature. The 20th century witnessed the rapid acceleration of "history as process": the radical human, social, and technological changes—originating with European civilization in the 18th and 19th centuries (as described by observers like Tocqueville and Marx) but eventually affecting the rest of humanity—that have accompanied the democratic and industrial revolutions. Yet though history as process sometimes seems to sweep away whole societies, revealing man as a mere plaything of events and tendencies beyond his control, Aron argues that "traditional" history—the permanence of political conflict, the importance of great and notorious men and women, the abiding influence of national genius—remains as essential as it was in Thucydides' era. Like Tocqueville, with whom he felt a strong kinship, and unlike Marxian determinists, Aron saw history as partly destiny and partly open to man's free choice.

This dual structure of modern history meant that politics was crucial—Aron even spoke of its "primacy"—but also that it didn't take place in a vacuum. At the heart of the political world, Aron believed, is a condition of political scarcity. Statesmen always confront limited options: Not all good things go together, and often they oppose one

Mr. Anderson is senior editor of *City Journal* and author of *Raymond Aron: The Recovery of the Political*. Recently, he and Daniel J. Mahoney prepared a new edition of Aron's classic, *The Opium of the Intellectuals*.



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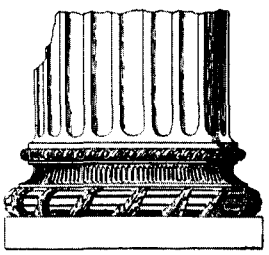
another; sometimes, it is a matter of choosing among evils. Any theory of political life that didn't put this truth front and center was, Aron maintained, "literary" politics at best; at worst, it could undermine the real goods of the human world. Few modern political thinkers have exhibited such a feel for the importance of political action. The philosopher Allan Bloom was right to celebrate Aron's "statesmanlike prudence."

Nowhere was the dance of process and traditional history more evident than in the apocalyptic wars of the 20th century. In a long section of *The Dawn of Universal History* entitled "From Sarajevo to Hiroshima," Aron describes the "technological surprise" of modern democratic and industrial warfare. On the eve of World War I, Europe's leaders thought they were undertaking an "ordinary" war that a few big battles would decide. They tragically discovered that in an age of democracy (in which conscription was the norm) and of industry (in which science and modern production techniques applied to the means of destruction) "wars tend naturally to expand into total wars." The line between combatants and noncombatants blurred. The stakes of war now included the very survival of communities. The logic of total war transformed nations into social factories, dedicated to supporting the war effort. The need to maintain the social factory required what one French historian called "the organization of enthusiasm"—incessant, soul-shrinking propaganda. These vast forces left the old bourgeois order in ruins and were responsible in part for the 20th century's barbarism.

But even faced with this history as process, politicians and citizens still mattered—mattered more than anything, in fact. If England and France had stopped Hitler from reoccupying the Rhineland in 1936, Aron suggests, World War II might never have broken out. And without Hitler, would Nazism have existed at all? Without Churchill, would England have found the inner will to resist the Nazi menace? Aron leads us to doubt it.

Aron was a keen analyst and determined opponent of the "secular religions"—a phrase he coined during World War II—of Fascism and Communism. *The Dawn of Universal History* features the first English translation of "The Future of the Secular Religions," a 1944 essay that is one of the most penetrating of Aron's writings. The secular religions were perversions of real faiths, but they were religions nonetheless, capable of inspiring fierce devotion. They provided a global interpretation of reality. They explained "the meaning of the catastrophes suffered by wretched humanity"—by singling out in Manichean fashion the villains of history: capitalists and Jews. These ideologies demanded discipline and sacrifice and instilled a sense of community in the here and now. Instead of directing man's gaze to the transcendent, however, they placed salvation in this world, after a Promethean upheaval that would demolish the old, unjust order. The Marxists dreamed of a universal order, open to all; the Nazis of a closed one, open only to members of the "superior" race. Both proved seductive to the masses whom modernity—history as process—had violently uprooted from their traditions.

The new faiths could only bring disaster, though, since they ignored or distorted human nature and the laws of social reality. For Aron, the French Catholic writer Georges Bernanos had it exactly right: The earthly paradise inevitably becomes "the paradise of beasts." To try to create utopia is to conjure dystopia. But the secular religions exposed a danger at the heart of liberal societies: Liberal democracies, under the influence of liberalism as a worldview, can lose what Pierre Manent calls an "instinct" for political existence. Complacent, they begin to assume that political evil is not a permanent feature of human life—that there are no enemies, only misunderstandings. People are basically rational, liberals think, and if we could all just grow rich together, then we would all just get along. This apolitical temptation weakens democratic regimes, since it leaves them vulnerable to their enemies, who continue to exist—whatever liberals might believe.



Aron, truly a conservative liberal, always rejected this naïveté. Healthy open societies demanded political courage. "It is grotesque," he warned, "to believe you can resist guns with butter or effort with rest." Democracies had to have "self-confidence," a sense of their "own mission," a "minimum of common faith or will." This meant being militarily prepared. It also meant balancing freedom and security. "The democracies tolerate heresies, but they cannot tolerate all heresies," Aron held, especially when heresy involved spying and sabotage. To remind liberal societies of such unpleasantness was the job of statesmen and, more broadly, of a ruling elite that was "neither cynical nor cowardly, that has political courage without being Machiavellian."

The essays and excerpts collected in *The Dawn of Universal History* explore the interconnections of political will and historical destiny in various settings—the two world wars, the Cold War, the end of colonialism—and also the role of America on the world stage (*pace* historian Tony Judt's introduction, Aron was a great admirer of the United States—more so, in fact, than any other French intellectual in memory, with the possible exception of Jean-François Revel). Throughout, Aron returns to an older model of political philosophy—that of Aristotle and Montesquieu, which combines the empirical analysis of political institutions and events with normative judgment. It is this mixture that makes his work so concrete. There are also lessons here strikingly relevant to our current War on Terror: The liberal tendency to dismiss political evil led us to underestimate the peril of Islamism, as political thinkers like Michael Ledeen and Victor Davis Hanson have argued so forcefully in recent months. In addition, as several commentators have observed, Islamism itself is comparable to the secular religions in its this-worldly political ambitions and wild-eyed fanaticism.

Since September 11, democratic leadership that is politically courageous without being cynical has never been more important. *The Dawn of Universal History* is thus far from being of merely historical interest. It is a tutorial in how to think about politics. **NR**

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Blame Dodger

BYRON YORK

The Age of Sacred Terror, by Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon (Random House, 490 pp., $25.95)

"THERE are few more durable illusions in American life than the omnipotent presidency," write Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, two former Clinton National Security Council staffers, in their new book. "Yet anyone who has worked in the White House knows that the office has remarkably little real power, not only when it comes to dealing with Congress and the judiciary but also in running the vast, unwieldy contraption that is the executive branch."

The alleged weakness of the presidency has been a common complaint over the years, one favored particularly by unsuccessful presidents and their aides. Benjamin and Simon argue that that weakness greatly hampered Bill Clinton as he tried to respond to the terrorist attacks—the World Trade Center bombing in 1993, the Khobar Towers bombing in 1996, the African embassy attacks in 1998, and the attack on the USS *Cole* in 2000—that befell the United States during his watch. The president fully grasped the terrorist threat, the authors write, "but others in the government only glimpsed the problem." As much as Clinton wanted to fight back, he was repeatedly frustrated by the government he putatively ran.

For example, after the embassy bombings, the White House ordered the State Department to prepare for possible chemical or biological attacks at embassies around the world. The department resisted. Meetings were held, and then more meetings, and still more meetings, but nothing was done. Finally, the White House gave up. "Odd as it may seem," Benjamin and Simon conclude, "a presidential phone call to convince the State Department to protect its own people was something no one could seriously contemplate." Clinton, it seems, lacked the power to tell his secretary of state what to do.

Nor could the president impose his will on the Pentagon. When Clinton realized that cruise-missile attacks would not be sufficient to get Osama bin Laden, and instead wanted a "boots on the ground" plan, he got the runaround from Gen. Hugh Shelton, then the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Instead of trying to address the problem, Benjamin and Simon write, Shelton gave the White House a proposal for a huge troop commitment that he knew would be politically unac-

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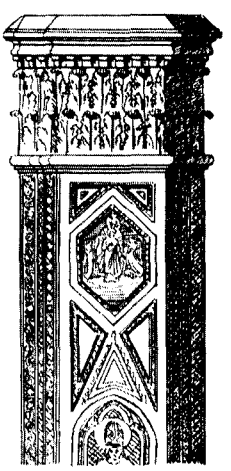
ceptable. Shelton's maneuver left a "bad taste," the authors say. "The civilian leaders . . . felt that the Pentagon was blowing them off when they badly needed a solution."

And then there was the FBI. Not only did director Louis Freeh harbor a "hatred" of Bill Clinton, Benjamin and Simon claim, but attorney general Janet Reno, Freeh's boss, "confessed to the White House that she simply had no control over the director." Neither did the president, who, beset by scandal and under investigation by the FBI for alleged campaign-finance violations, would have found it politically damaging to fire Freeh. The authors' conclusion: "Freeh could not be removed; the Bureau could not be held accountable."

Much of this book is a tale of such frustration. Faced with internal opposition, Clinton and his team accomplished less than they hoped in the fight against terrorism. But the authors do not truly grapple with a glaring weakness in their case: Yes, presidents complain about the bureaucracy, but some are able to bend it to their will, while others are bent by it. George W. Bush, for example, has encountered resistance from the State Department, the Pentagon, and others in the war on terrorism. But those interests—the same ones that pushed Clinton around—have largely given way in the face of Bush's determination. Bush is not an omnipotent president, but he is, unlike Clinton, a leader, and the people who work for him know that.



But a stubborn bureaucracy, it turns out, was not Clinton's only challenge. According to Benjamin and Simon, Clinton also had a serious problem with the press. In particular, journalists did not believe his explanation for his August 1998 decision to launch a cruise-missile strike on the al-Shifa pharmaceutical factory in Sudan. The strike, along with another missile attack on al-Qaeda camps in Afghanistan, came just days after Clinton's testimony in the Monica Lewinsky case, and many reporters suspected they were a "wag the dog" maneuver to divert attention from the scandal. Benjamin and Simon claim that such suspicions were completely unfounded because of "the absurdity of the idea that any president, and especially one with such a famously acute political sensibility, *would actually think* he could get away with wagging the dog."

■

The president appeared somewhat interested in the war on terrorism—but impassioned by the war on Kenneth Starr.

■

And yet, that is what many reporters believed—and the weakness of the evidence that al-Shifa was involved in the production of chemical weapons did nothing to help the White House. That skepticism was fatal, the authors argue, because it led the public to tragically underestimate the danger posed by bin Laden and his terrorist organization. "The dismissal of the al-Shifa attack as a scandalous blunder had serious consequences, including the failure of the public to comprehend the nature of the al-Qaeda threat," Benjamin and Simon write. "With public discussion of the threat in the years before September 11, there would have been a chance to talk about sustained military action against Afghanistan and the use of U.S. ground forces to hunt down the terrorists."

That is the crux of the authors' argument: A massive terrorist attack came to America, at least in part because no one took Bill Clinton seriously or followed his orders. If only the president had had real power!

While Benjamin and Simon devote a significant portion of their book to the limits on Clinton's ability to act, they spend less time exploring the question of why Clinton was so handicapped. For example, why were there so many doubts about the al-Shifa attack? The authors believe it was because Americans had a "fixation on scandal" throughout 1998—a "dangerous addiction" that "left little space for the perception of new threats." The press in particular, Benjamin and Simon argue, suffered from "a cynicism about the truthfulness of those in office."

And why was that? The authors admit that the White House bore some blame. "President Clinton's deeds, for which he was impeached, helped feed this appetite," they write. But they seem not to realize completely the corrosive effects of Clinton's actions. Might the particularly strong cynicism of the Clinton years have had something to do with a president who throughout his career carried a reputation for not telling the truth? Might it have had something to do with the events of 1998 alone, during which that president lied to a federal judge, lied to the American people, and then went before a grand jury to swear under oath that he had told the truth? Might it have had something to do with a president who appeared somewhat interested in the war on terrorism but positively impassioned by the war on Kenneth Starr? Those were not small things, and no one should be surprised that they created a virulent cynicism that helped disable Clinton's presidency.

None of that is to say that *The Age of Sacred Terror* is a bad book. It is, in fact, a valuable contribution to our understanding of the American government's reaction to the growth of Islamist terror. The authors make good use of thousands of pages of transcripts from the criminal trials that grew out of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, the African embassy bombings, and other cases. They also provide an inside, real-life perspective on the attitude toward terrorism that prevailed inside the law-enforcement and national-security establishment during much of the 1990s. For example, there was a lull in anti-terrorism activity in the mid 1990s; even with the reams of information obtained from Ramzi Yousef, a key player in the World Trade Center bombing, American officials tended to downplay the terrorist threat. The FBI, according to Benjamin and Simon, viewed Yousef as "a virtuoso freelancer" who was leading a

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bunch of incompetents; one of the 1993 bombers, Mohammed Salameh, actually went to a Ryder rental office in an attempt to collect the deposit on the van that was used in the attack. How could such people be taken seriously? The authors conclude that the Salameh episode in particular "left a lasting imprint" on law enforcement: "No group that relied on someone that stupid could possibly pose a serious threat."

The authors also criticize the Bush administration for its pre–September 11 record on terrorism, especially for some appalling lapses inside the FBI and intelligence agencies. They accuse the Bush national-security team of coming into office with "a strong disdain" for the policies of the outgoing Clinton team, which was undoubtedly true. But in the end, this book is not about George W. Bush but about Bill Clinton. For all their attempts to portray Clinton as the victim of a culture of scandal or a weak presidency, Benjamin and Simon reveal a president who was instead a victim of his own flaws. Even when Clinton was right about the threat of terrorism, he lacked the constancy to follow through and the credibility to make anyone follow him.

Discussing Clinton's difficulties with the military, the authors quote a former senior Pentagon official who knew both the president and Gen. Shelton: "Shelton, like [Colin] Powell, had eyed up Clinton and decided he didn't have the guts to fight a war. And if you make that conclusion, you're not going to put forward anything in a gray area because you're afraid he's going to wimp out." No doubt many others in the U.S. government—not to mention friends and enemies abroad—made the same assessment. Add that to Clinton's credibility problem, and you have a president unable to deal effectively with the threat of terrorism.

There is an almost tragic undertone to *The Age of Sacred Terror*: People like Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon worked hard in the fight against terrorism, serving their boss as if he were an honest and steadfast and courageous man. But he wasn't, and now their account of that time reads like an extended excuse for his failures. **NR**

The Prince's Architect

CATESBY LEIGH

John Simpson: The Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace, and Other Works, by Richard John and David Watkin (Andreas Papadakis, 135 pp., $40)

REMEMBER the Prince of Wales's campaign for traditional architecture? Vaguely, perhaps. After all, it was nearly two decades ago that H.R.H. boldly entered the architectural arena, comparing a competition-winning design for a jarring, space-station-style addition to London's National Gallery to "a monstrous carbuncle on the face of a much-loved and elegant friend." The space-station addition was scrapped, and Charles became the arch-enemy of a deeply entrenched modernist establishment in which everyone who has done his bit to make Britain uglier seems to have been dubbed Lord this or Sir that.

More royal denunciations ensued. The prince described the very unpopular scheme for a new British Library, which was nevertheless carried out, as "a dim collection of brick sheds groping for some symbolic significance." The design for a new London office building, also realized, resembled "a 1930s wireless." Postwar architects and planners, Charles declared in 1987, had wrought more havoc on London than the Luftwaffe.

In arguing for the principle of cultural continuity in design, Charles, never known for his common touch, struck a chord with the public. Response to *A Vision of Britain*, his 1988 BBC documentary on architecture and planning, was overwhelmingly favorable. In *Vision*, which also appeared in book format, the prince offered an informed and superbly illustrated argument for a deeper appre-

Mr. Leigh writes about architecture and fine art and lives in Washington, D.C.

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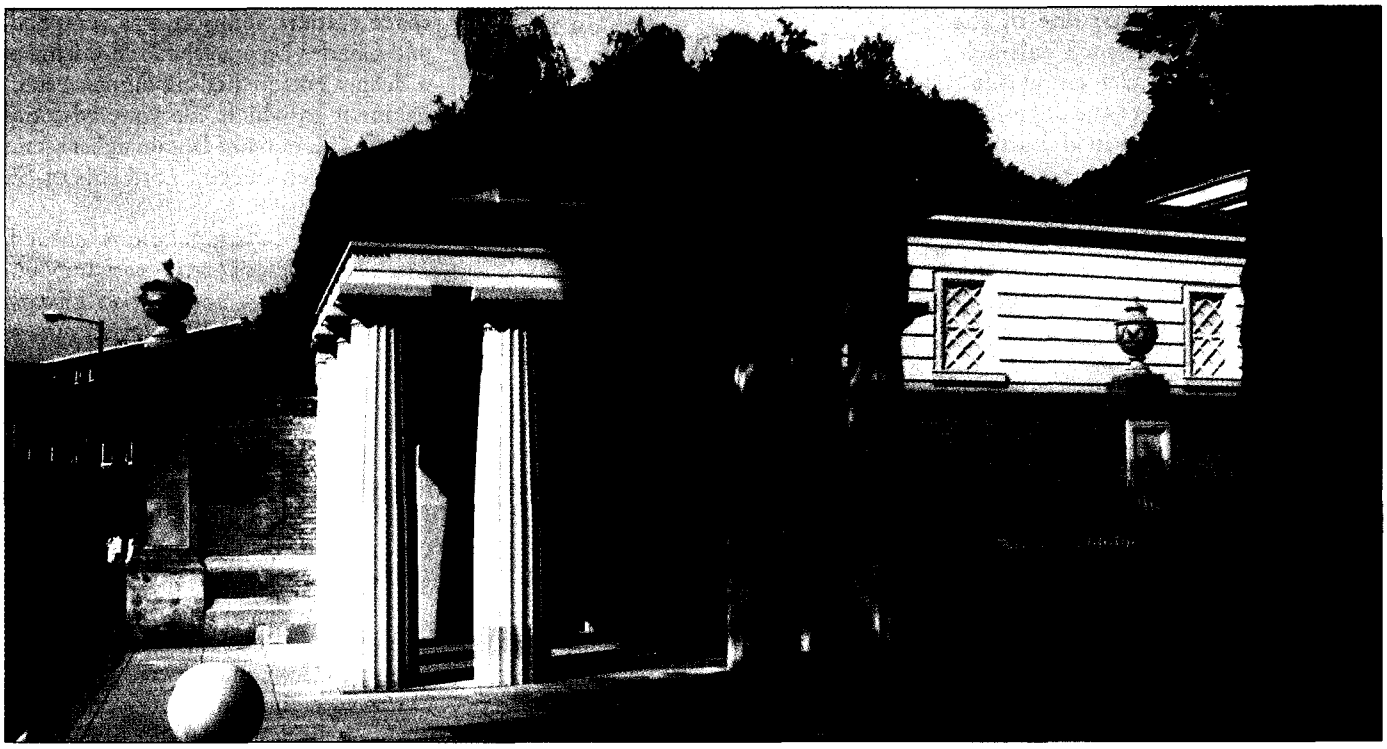

The entrance portico of the Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace

ciation of the nation's historic urban settings and against the rule of modernist dogma and commercial expediency. An amateur watercolorist, Charles also recommended that the art of drawing be cultivated so as to nurture a more refined visual culture, and that aspiring architects not only verse themselves in the classical or Gothic traditions as a point of departure for their artistic development but learn to appreciate the amenity of ornament.

After the documentary, the logical next step was for the prince to promote the establishment of an academic institution that would offer an alternative to modernist training. In 1992, the Prince of Wales's Institute of Architecture opened near Regent's Park. It wasn't long, however, before the place was rife with financial problems and factionalism. Amidst the turmoil, Charles proved hopelessly indecisive, while his adversaries pegged him as an effete romantic reactionary.

Those adversaries gained traction after Charles parted with Princess Diana and got creamed in the ensuing public-relations contest. Then came Tony Blair's May 1997 election as prime minister. Blair, exponent of "Cool Britannia" and a good friend of celebrated high-tech modernists Richard Rogers and Norman Foster, was not in sync, to put it mildly, with the prince's architectural outlook. Indeed, the traditional architects in the prince's camp reaped almost no patronage from Britain's lottery-funded millennial building spree.

Charles's public image continued to deteriorate, along with the royal family's, after Diana's death in 1997, and his political handlers yanked him off the architectural battlefield. With "progressive" architects aligned with Blair's popular New Labour government, the prince's traditionalism could now be branded not merely a "reactionary" preoccupation, but a High Tory one. In fact, such a partisan divide on architectural matters does exist at the elite level, and Buckingham Palace hardly wished to exacerbate it. The prince quieted down. His institute went into a tailspin, and is now defunct.

Nevertheless, the beautiful village of Poundbury, Dorset, master-planned in 1989 under the prince's auspices, has been a commercial success and has had considerable influence on both the homebuilding industry and official urban-planning guidelines in Britain. The modernist camp, and, alas, some of the prince's disillusioned confederates, have nevertheless pronounced his campaign a failure. It simply isn't so, and an architectural monograph, *John Simpson: The Queen's Gallery Buckingham Palace and Other Works*, comes as a very timely corrective to such falsehoods.

A member of the prince's circle, Simpson is one of the finest classical architects to have emerged since World War II. Now in his late 40s—young by the standards of his profession—he has already displayed great ability in carrying out two major institutional commissions.

The more publicized of the two commissions is the Queen's Gallery at Buckingham Palace, which opened to wide acclaim in May. On the outside, Simpson's small but picturesque entrance portico, located close to Buckingham Palace Road, gives the gallery—whose space he has multiplied more than threefold—a public prominence it never had. The portico, which features stout Doric columns and detailing both antiquarian and whimsical, is set perpendicularly to the new gallery building, the latter a relatively low-profile structure skillfully inserted into the dense fabric of the palace complex.

Inside, the decoration of the entrance hall, stair lobby, and galleries themselves is sumptuous, and, on the whole, very satisfying. The Anglo-classicists on whose work Simpson drew in the gallery

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project include John Nash (1752–1835), who generated the Regency style and labored extensively at the palace, and the somewhat eccentric John Soane (1753–1837).

Soane is Simpson's main man. He is also a modernist darling. Contemporary commentators tend to focus on his complex and dramatically top-lit interior spaces as well as his distinctive pendentive domes and cross-vaulted ceilings. Likewise admired is Soane's more idiosyncratic ornament, in which traditional motifs are simplified through the imposition of a rectilinear rigidity that anticipates the "stripped" classicism of the 1920s and 1930s. Simpson makes use of these innovations, to be sure, but where he stands apart is in seeing them in the larger context of Soane's sense of grandeur—his lively appreciation of the role of sculpture and brilliant color in creating a scenographic drama of form and space.

This sense of drama shines through at the Queen's Gallery, and in Simpson's extensive and brilliant renovations at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, which owe much to the 19th-century classicist C. R. Cockerell, as well as to Soane. The Fellows' Dining Room, in particular, is a gorgeous exercise in Grecian polychromy. It is decorated with casts of the interior frieze from the Temple of Apollo Epicurius at Bassae in which figures in low relief are highlighted against a soft red background; with rows of Ionic semi-columns whose flared capitals are painted gold, red, and blue; with stenciled floral ornament on the ceiling beams; and with a 44-foot-long walnut table pierced by four marvelous bronze torchères. Among dining rooms of recent vintage, perhaps only John Blatteau's much larger Benjamin Franklin Dining Room at the U.S. State Department is a rival in splendor.

Unfortunately, Simpson's ambitious scheme for a four-and-one-half-acre parcel of Paternoster Square, once the warren of winding lanes adjacent to St. Paul's Cathedral where Britain's publishers were concentrated, was not realized. This area was leveled during the Blitz and eventually converted into a no man's land of bleak office towers that inspired the prince's Luftwaffe crack. Under a plan produced at Charles's urging, Simpson replaced the Orwellian slabs with a densely built fabric of office buildings with ground-level and underground shopping, as well as underground parking and Tube access, and narrow streets above. The buildings' elevation would decrease as they got nearer the cathedral, and the grandest of them would face a new plaza.

The recession of the early 1990s caused Simpson's plan to be shelved, but the prince's subsequent reversals of fortune buried it. Late in 1997 the Mitsubishi Estate Company (whose holdings include Rockefeller Center) unveiled a new plan for Paternoster Square, which is now being carried out: anodyne postmodern buildings fronting on an enlarged pedestrian plaza. The hamstrung prince raised no objection.

■

This book is excellent for anyone interested in the revival of classical design.

■

Simpson's model for a market hall in his square is included in this monograph. An open-air loggia in the Italian manner, it incorporates two classical orders (Doric and Ionic) at two different scales and is handsomely decorated with ball-finials and urns: a tremendously impressive composition. And how exquisitely useless such a structure would have been! How merely expressive of a sense of urban amenity, of the sheer joy of being alive! (Simpson has built an altogether more rustic, eccentric, and picturesque market hall for Poundbury.)

The monograph's authors are Richard John, a former director of the prince's institute who now teaches at the University of Miami, and David Watkin, a Cambridge architectural historian who has written extensively about 18th- and 19th-century classical architecture in Britain. The authors, who have figured prominently in Britain's classical resurgence, know Simpson's work inside out, and are thoroughly acquainted with the precedents he is drawing on. They are decidedly uncritical of his work; I, on the other hand, must confess that some of Simpson's detailing—including the rather bizarre acroterion crowning his Queen's Gallery entrance portico, which resembles a stylized octopus sprouting from a hooked shaft—is just a bit too whimsical for my taste.

The text is clear and succinct, and the book is generously illustrated (though a site plan for Simpson's Paternoster Square scheme would have been helpful). This is a fine book for coffee-table browsing, but it is also an excellent volume for anyone interested in the current revival of classical design. **NR**

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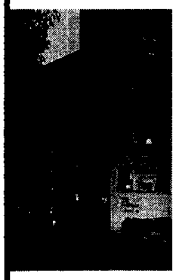

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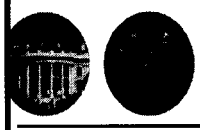

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■ SHELF LIFE ■

LIKE the famous hedgehog popularized by Isaiah Berlin, Ronald Reagan was a man of one big idea: freedom. In *Reagan's War: The Epic Story of His Forty-Year Struggle and Final Triumph over Communism* (Doubleday, 339 pp., $26), Peter Schweizer tells the gripping story of how Reagan, as early as his Hollywood days, was motivated by the desire to rid the world of one of its most brutal tyrannies. The outline of the story is of course well known, but Schweizer has brought forth some interesting material. He quotes, for example, a 1951 article in which Reagan explained why he thought McCarthyite tactics were dangerous to the anti-Communist cause: "If we get so frightened that we suspend our traditional democratic freedoms in order to fight [the Communists]—they still have won. They have shown that democracy won't work when the going gets tough." These are wise words, of enduring significance for Americans; and they show Reagan as a man able to transcend the emotional currents of his time.

Some of Reagan's greatest hits appear in these pages—for example, a stirring declaration from the 1980 campaign: "There will be no more Vietnams. Regardless of price or promise—be it oil from Arabia or an ambassador sitting in Peking—there will be no more abandonment of friends by the United States of America." Throughout this book comes the clear idea that Reagan numbered among America's friends anyone who believes in freedom for humanity—and that Reagan made an incalculable difference in their great cause.

■ Historian John Lukacs has written a number of books in which Winston Churchill plays a key role. Now, in *Churchill: Visionary. Statesman. Historian* (Yale, 202 pp., $21.95), he offers the summary of a lifetime's reflections on this indispensable man. The author's portrayal is sensitive, rejecting the representation of Churchill as "an atavistic Germanophobe Britisher, an old-fashioned John Bull, obsessed with the spectre of German power and obsessed with a single-minded desire to destroy it." Churchill's achievement was to see through Hitler's professions of anti-Communism, and recognize him as an immediate threat to civilization; Lukacs points out that Churchill was in "a minority among conservatives." The Churchill in this book is, in Lukacs's words, "complicated" but not finally "elusive." He was an anti-Communist who made common cause with Stalin; a British patriot who was also "a principal proponent of a united Europe."

Most important, as Lukacs observes in his closing chapter on Churchill's funeral, he was the pivotal figure who defeated the Nazis:

> To the current generation it seems unthinkable that Hitler could ever have won the war. . . . People still do not know how close Hitler and his cohorts came to winning the war in 1940. . . . [The English] could have been conquered. . . . Churchill saved them from this fate . . . [and] it is a mark of the decency and of the common sense of the people of England that they were not, and are not now, puffed up with pride in remembering those days, and that the stillness reigning over Churchill's funeral reflects their now profound sentiment of still gratitude to him for having done so.

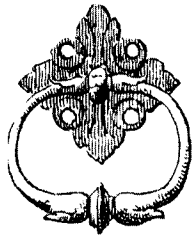
■ The U.S. intelligence community is "broken and urgently in need of repair": That is the conclusion of *Breakdown: How America's Intelligence Failures Led to September 11* (Regnery, 273 pp., $27.95), the important and persuasive new book by acclaimed *Washington Times* defense correspondent Bill Gertz. The book details the specific errors and oversights of U.S. intelligence officials in the years leading up to 9/11—an alarming chronicle that has already done much to advance the cause of intelligence reform. Gertz says, specifically, that we need to create a new clandestine-operations service adapted to post–Cold War conditions and capable of infiltrating the ranks of America's new terrorist enemies: "There can be no excuse for the CIA's failure to penetrate al-Qaeda, when twenty-year-old Islamic convert John Walker Lindh gained access to al-Qaeda and met Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan."

■ The Claremont Institute's Ken Masugi is known to NR readers as a distinguished political philosopher. He and coauthor Brian P. Janiskee (of California State University, San Bernardino) have just released a brief but valuable textbook on the operation of one of the most important and complex governments in the world: the State of California. In *Democracy in California: Politics and Government in the Golden State* (Rowman & Littlefield, 141 pp., $22.95), the authors contend that Californians are "Tocqueville's Americans . . . reveal[ing] an indifference to politics, a love of wealth, a craving for novelty, an unhealthy individualism, and a jealousy about their equality that can overwhelm even their regard for liberty." What kind of government does such a citizenry have? One that "increasingly becomes the instrument . . . for a politics based on the satisfaction of passions"—and thus "the centralized government Tocqueville feared."

Tip O'Neill was right that all politics are local; this book shows how the great issues of self-government work out at the most prosaic of levels.

■ Born in a tenement in the South Bronx in 1916, William J. McCullough was part of the generation that saw America evolve through foreign wars and domestic upheavals into a global superpower. His memoir, *Minuteman/Activist: To Promote the General Welfare* (Rutledge, 507 pp., $24.95), tells the story of one man's life in that turbulent century: his service in the U.S. military government of Germany from 1945 to 1948, his career as a New York City policeman, his work as a community activist in South Carolina, and his numerous avocations. All of his reminiscences are deeply charged with love of country. His detailed, often diaristic account is an act of gratitude for the experiences America made possible for him.

—MICHAEL POTEMRA



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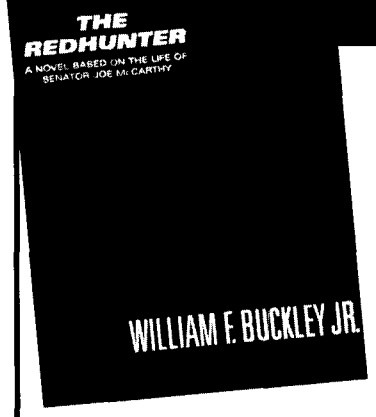

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WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

Is Bush's Economic Policy Enough?

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 8

THE complaints we hear that the president hasn't given attention to domestic economic problems recall the wisdom of our ancestors. It is that most economic problems are best met by—doing nothing. Always provided, of course . . .

The basic engines of economic activity have to be in motion. If, for instance, the incentive to work declines as state welfare rises, the lines will intersect at a point that leaves the marginal worker undisposed to bestir himself to work. This complaint is repeatedly made in Germany and Great Britain, where about 10 percent are unemployed year after year. That is a distortion, correctable only by progressively reducing welfare payments after what, in other contexts, has been called a decent interval.

Conversely, if the person engaged in work abuts on taxes that eat up a disproportionate part of his income, the impulse to work hard and more is reduced. Only government can levy taxes. The obligation of government, then, is negative: Do not overtax.

If government "does nothing," natural inclinations, as prophesied by Adam Smith, are unharnessed, productivity increases, and prosperity is enhanced. But the political adage goes further than that. It tells you to do nothing but to affect to be doing a great deal. That is necessary because democratic mechanisms are a part of the modern condition, and it is, so to speak, un-American for a president to intone from the Oval Office in a message to America: We must all consecrate ourselves to doing nothing.

When President Bush spoke most roundly about his economic policies, it was at the economic forum plenary session in Waco back in August. He relied heavily on the artillery of optimism. He expressed his confidence in America, in the strides we are making, in the productivity of the worker, the integrity of the vast majority of chief executive officers, and the inherent vitality of our system.

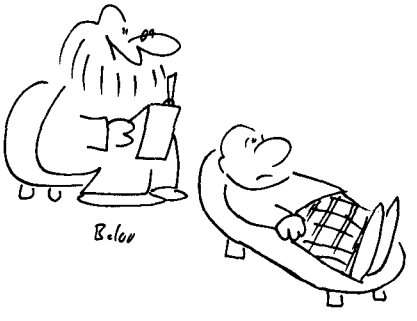
At the interventionist level (what can the government do?), he said that we needed a terrorism "insurance bill" to get American hard hats back to work. He didn't define the bill. He said that we needed an "energy policy," but did not give its specifications either. He said that to repeal the tax cuts of 2001 would be "an unmitigated disaster," indeed that those cuts should be made permanent.

On corporate mores, he pledged to prosecute malefactors, he said that employees should not be bound to invest in the stock of the company that employs them, and that employees should be permitted to unload their stock even as CEOs have that right.

We need (he continued) medical-liability reform. Doctors' care depends heavily on continued consumer sovereignty over their own medical care and on protection from frivolous lawsuits and excessive judgments. The president feels strongly about home ownership and wants a "down-payment assistance program out of Washington, D.C."

That, two months ago, is the kernel of President Bush's economic policy. Much of it is indeed laissez faire, but there is a hard sprinkling of government programs there, to give at least rhetorical help to those Americans who have lost their jobs, lost their pension funds, and struggle to meet their mortgage payments. What is being asked now, a month before the political payday, is: Are those words from Bush in August hard-hitting enough to persuade the voters that he has a serious concern other than the future of Saddam Hussein?

That question cannot be answered by economic theorists. And whatever Mr. Bush's general optimism, there is cause for distress over rising unemployment, sluggish business profits, and what appears a gestating domestic fear to spend, prompted by crystallizing convictions that there are rainy days ahead, and that economic meteorology is outside the powers of government to control.



"Actually, according to the test results, your low self-esteem is right on the money."

While You Were Out

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 11

A SINGLE day's news sometimes looks like the distillate of an irony factory. It's there to remind us of contradictory human behavior on almost every scale, reaching back into history, and projecting paradoxes for tomorrow.

On the broad scale, we get Argentina. It has defaulted on $140 billion in bonds outstanding to the private sector, and faces now its debt to the International Monetary Fund. The news is that that's being worked out, a rescheduling of a debt that reflects the profligacy of Argentine policies dating back to the reign of Juan Peron. It seems nowadays incredible that only 50 years ago, Argentina's level of income exceeded that of France.

Sharing the news is Brazil's impending election of a far-out leftist as president. Brazil's socialists have working for them the starkness of the contrast between those who prosper, and those who suffer a dire poverty. But Brazilians are being ushered into one more chapter in attempts at political alchemy, the substitution of political for economic means of achieving economic progress. Yes, and the same day gives us Venezuela, with 1 million protesters against the socialist and autocratic rule of Hugo Chavez. Populist revolts against left-minded government rule are unusual, because the structure of the Left's policies is designed to appeal to the appetites of the many, leaving us with another political cauldron in Latin America.

Meanwhile, China is exhibiting its two faces in its attempted evolution into a mercantile state with fundamentalist Marxist passions on the matter of religion. We have a 15-year sentence handed out to a banker charged with bribery, and life sentences handed out to three leaders of an underground Christian church. The new China seems to be say-

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ing: We will not tolerate crimes by businessmen because that inhibits the growth of capitalism, which we are encouraging. But do not mistake the new China. We are not sentimentalists who tolerate the single true enemy, the cultivators of religious faith who hold entities higher than the leaders of China as the sources of moral authority.

In Moscow, the retreat from Communism is marked by the supreme irony centering on Lubyanka Square. When the Soviet regime was overthrown in 1991 the first statue to come down was that of Feliks Dzerzhinsky. He was the great father of the KGB, the patron of executions by the thousands in the prison at one end of the square, and of millions sent off to the Gulag. The mayor of Moscow proposed the restoration of that statue, the equivalent of raising a statue to Himmler in Berlin. But the reaction has taken an exuberant political turn: A member of parliament proposes erecting a statue in that square to Czar Nicholas II, a kind of symbolic apology for the Bolshevik sin of executing the czar, his wife, and his children. That should make for a great national debate.

The domestic news features, of course, a great national debate on Iraq which, however, reflects less than a great national division, since the supporters of Mr. Bush are heavily preponderant. The interesting skirmishes are in the Outback. In California, challenger Bill Simon mistakenly alleged that a photograph of Governor Gray Davis accepting a check from a political support group was snapped in the governor's office. In fact, it was taken in a private house. Gov. Davis, who spent $20 million this summer portraying Simon as a crook, ran into the problem that the civil conviction of Simon was overturned by the courts. Now, Davis affects a bride's dismay over her honor impugned. Barrels of money to Gov. Davis aren't blanched by virtue of having been conveyed off-premises, but institutional catechisms are deferred to—it's okay to eat meat but not on Fridays.

The candidate running against Max Baucus for the Senate seat in Montana pulled out of the race the same day because, he said, his reputation was now ruined by a Democratic ad suggesting he was gay, far from the truth, but mortally effective. We didn't intend any such imputation, the Democratic spokesman insisted. But after the ads came out, the challenger's negative ratings more than doubled. In Montana, it is not yet safe to be gay and run for higher office.

Thus are the rules defined, or lived by, in California and Montana, and the contradictions faced on which presence should preside over the square in Moscow, and whether secure property rights and the rule of law should yield in Brazil and Venezuela. And in America we struggle along, weaving our way about the paradoxes of time and place, contributing our own.

The Generosity of Pataki Lovers

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 15

My brothers in defining conservative orthodoxy have taken a position on election-spending legislation. The thought tends to be that it is unconstitutional to attempt regulation, and also fruitless to attempt to do so. From there they (we) reassuringly conclude that *just as long* as you *know* who gave what to whom, mischief can't really be done, because the public firehose will beam in on attempted malefaction, spray it with Lysol, and civic virtue will prevail.

Last week, the *New York Times* did a story on the financing of the New York campaign of Governor George Pataki, who is being challenged by State Comptroller Carl McCall. Do you want to know who/what is the largest contributor to the Pataki campaign? It is given as "Kawasaki, Tokyo." How much? $220,000. Under "Relationship to the State Government" we have: "Builder of railcars for the state-run New York City subway system." We have, also, LCOR, Inc., "State-backed developer at Kennedy Airport, Queens West and Jamaica." Down the line we see such as Easco Boiler, "Manufacturer of heating equipment purchased by the state."

So what prompts Kawasaki to come in for a quarter of a million dollars? Such questions were put to Michael McKeon, a spokesman for Mr. Pataki. He is reported as having said that "there was no relationship between the state contracts and the contributions." More specifically, gifts are coming in because he [Pataki] "is doing a good job, and people want to continue it." Is that a simple answer? Ask McKeon. "It is as simple as that," Mr. McKeon elucidates.

The Pataki camp gives as an illustration of the surviving independence of Albany under Pataki the relative economic fate of the French-owned Alstom company. It contributed a mere $37,500, and it is in the business of subway cars, just like Kawasaki. When time came to designate the primary contractor for a state deal that could be worth as much as $2.3 billion, who was the number one beneficiary of the contract? Alstom. Kawasaki came in as secondary supplier.

Kawasaki was there to confirm the disinterestedness of Kawasaki in coming up with $220,000 for Pataki. "It would be the cynic who presumes political contributions are going to leverage favors," said Gary Lewi, a spokesman for Kawasaki. If you call a skeptic a cynic, what do you call someone who really believes that Kawasaki is giving a quarter of a million to Pataki because he is such a gorgeous governor?

What the let-everybody-give-whatever-they-want dogmatists can't really answer is the question: What are the engines of political hygiene going to do about the Kawasakis of this world? The *New York Times* story goes on to discuss the gratitude of political appointees, giving as an example, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. Mr. Edward Dunn, the chairman of the MTA finance committee, "along with his wife," has donated $34,000. The authority's chairman, Peter Kalikow, contributed, together with his wife, "at least $80,000." How much are Messrs. Dunn and Kalikow paid, that they can handle five-digit contributions? Or are they using their wives' money?

In California, the exact same story is being repeated, and it just happens that the profiteer on that scene, incumbent Governor Gray Davis, is a Democrat. Money pours in. In New York there is irony abounding because Democrats outnumber Republicans 3–2. But it is fair to generalize that nobody is very much concerned about these swollen gifts by manifest postulants for government preference. Only the Libertarian candidate, who is a mere cipher in the election, makes the point that the principal way to eliminate excess election spending is to limit patronage.

That isn't going to happen. Somebody is going to pick the contractors who build subways, and those somebodies are going to be appointed by the governor, so that the Kawasakis of this world are always going to find special strength and virtue in any incumbent governor, including Ivan the Terrible. Emphasis should be on reducing gross expenditures, which means: targeting television.

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■ AND ANOTHER THING . . . ■

JOHN DERBYSHIRE

THE late Sir Kingsley Amis wrote a spoof on Shakespeare's "Fear no more the heat o' the sun," beginning: "Look thy last on all things shitty, / While thou'rt at it . . . " The body of the poem goes on to list aspects of the modern world that Amis regarded as shitty—pop stars, soccer fans, tourists, and so on. The last stanza goes:

> High-rise blocks and action paintings,
> Sculptures made from wire and lead:
> Each of them a sight more lovely
> Than the curtains round your bed.

I had occasion to recall these lines recently. I had woken up one morning with a pain in my chest and gasping for breath. In common with, I think, most males of the species, I have a deep-rooted belief that illness is best ignored, and that most things get better of their own accord, provided you show them no fear. *Stress*, I thought, *been working too hard. Must slow down.* I therefore got up and embarked on my usual 16-hour day.

Two weeks of wheezing and panting, supplemented by much nagging from my wife, drove me to the family doctor, who ordered me to a local radiology clinic for X-rays. The clinic told me to proceed directly to the Emergency Room of my local hospital, where a pulmonary specialist would meet me.

Oh my God, I have cancer, was my natural and immediate reaction. This made for a miserable drive over to the ER, but much relief when I got an actual diagnosis. "Spontaneous pneumothorax," said the ER doctor in response to my query, squinting up at a syringe he was calibrating.

I did a quick construe. "'Air in the chest'? Isn't there *supposed* to be air in my chest? Isn't that what chests are *for*, actually?"

"Supposed to be in the lungs," he explained, swabbing my arm. "Hold still there. Good. Left lung sprang a leak. Pfffft! Air in chest, see? Lung collapsed." He then proceeded to punch a hole through my chest wall, insert a tube with an attached apparatus, and admit me to the hospital. Apparently I had been walking around for two weeks with a single working lung.

I won't say that my incarceration was altogether unpleasant. The nursing profession seems to have mislaid, or abandoned, the art of giving bed-baths, so if you cannot make your way to the shower, you are left to stink. That aside, I was quite happy to have been removed from the demands of family and editors for 48 hours, on the undisputable authority of the medical profession. The food was not at all bad, though I speak here as one raised on English boys'-school lunches. I had the essays of Aldous Huxley for company, having promised to review them for a magazine. Furthermore, the ER doctor's syringe had contained morphine, and I got more of that wonderful, soothing banisher of all cares at three-hour intervals through the first day and a half. It is very droll to read Aldous Huxley while slipping in and out of a narcotic stupor.

■

It all looks so frail, so absurdly temporary, this arrangement of tubes and tissues.

■

When the morphine stopped, though, Kingsley Amis came padding in. *The curtains round your bed.* Yes, there were curtains round my bed, as I suppose there will be at the end time. Impossible not to think about these things. Impossible, too, to ignore the reality of a hospital—a place of pills and potions, of pain and sickness, of resignation and dwindling hope, of wheezing and groaning. All around me tremulous voices re-told their symptoms to impatient doctors, gowned specters shuffled their way to the bathroom holding on to their IV stands, and bodies shifted restlessly on beds, striving to minimize discomfort. All the pleasure, the holiday spirit, fell away as the morphine ebbed, and I was trapped at last in a Gustave Doré engraving of hell, longing desperately for the voices of my children—and yes, even my editors. At last I was very glad to be out of there.

Now, you may say that I am making a fuss about nothing. You may yourself have survived far greater insults to your physical person, and be shaking your head in disbelief at my distress over such a brief and trivial affliction.

Look at it from my point of view, though. Long blessed with perfect health, I have now lost my innocence. The founder of this magazine has a strict conversational rule that nobody may speak for more than two minutes about his bodily ailments. This always seemed to me an excellent and sensible rule, but I see I have violated it by several hundred percent in this space. I am now thinking about my body, and even *writing* about it—neither of which things I ever felt the slightest urge to do before. A quick scan of the items archived on my website confirms that none of the half million words I have published on innumerable topics across several years has concerned my own mortal tissue. That was in keeping with my attitude to the stuff. St. Francis of Assisi, on his deathbed, is supposed to have apologized to his body, which he addressed as "poor brother donkey." That is how I always imagined myself going. I never expected the wretched donkey would up and kick me halfway through the journey.

This morning, after brushing my teeth, I caught myself looking into my open mouth in the mirror, trying to peer down that dark tube that falls away at the back. Away in those lightless inner regions the tube branches and re-branches, terminating in tiny floriform structures that pass life-giving oxygen to my blood, and gather up waste gases for exhalation. That, at any rate, is what happens when everything works—which, I now know, everything may decide to stop doing at any moment, without warning, spontaneously. It all looks so frail, so absurdly *temporary*, this arrangement of tubes and tissues.

Which, of course, it is. Our lives hang by a thread. We know not the day nor the hour. *Timor mortis conturbat me.* **NR**

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